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## SOCIALISM AND THE TARIFF ISSUE.

Are Socialists Protectionists or Free Traders? This is a question which appears to worry some workers who derive their ideas about Socialism from the Labour Party and kindred organisations. The Socialist Party supports neither policy and opposes all the parties which enlist the support of the workers by promising either to protect them from the competition of foreign goods or to secure them cheap food. Socialists maintain that the tariff issue is one which concerns the capitalist class and not the working class; and that, consequently, the workers are wasting their time and energy in giving their support to the different sections of the master-class who put these policies forward.

For the last hundred years or more, these rival policies have been used by the masters to divide the workers and hinder them in developing an independent political party; and the futility of the Labour Party from the workers' point of view is clearly demonstrated by its inability to drive this red-herring from its political path—nay, its readiness to help in dangling this rotten fish of long ago in front of the workers' noses.

A hundred years ago Free Trade was the battle-cry of the British manufacturers conquering the markets of the world with the cheap goods which machinery (plus child-labour in many cases) made possible. They wanted cheap raw materials and, above all, cheap food, because this enabled them to lower wages more easily. Hence they were most aggressive in demanding the repeal of the Corn Laws, which they secured in 1846 and celebrated by reducing wages 10 per cent. shortly after.

Protection at that time was the creed of the landed class, who got rich on rents squeezed from the capitalist farmers. The

free importation of corn hit these interests in that important place, their pockets; but then, and since, protectionists have always pretended, like their political rivals, to have the interests of the workers at heart.

In some respects the situation is different to-day. Capitalism, based upon modern industry, has developed apace in countries which formerly provided markets for British goods. The tables have been turned and these countries now pour cheap goods into the one-time workshop of the world. This has led to a change of outlook on the part even of that considerable section of the master-class which calls itself Liberal. Sectional interests among the masters are less clearly defined. Landlords have bought shares in industrial and financial concerns. Industrial magnates have purchased land. Hence it is easy for a "National" Government with an "open mind" on the tariff issue to hold office and secure the support of the major portion of the master-class, while a majority of the workers, still in the dark regarding the cause of their permanent condition—poverty—turn in despair to such a Government for some amendment of their lot. Is there any real ground for this hope? Five million unemployed in Germany and double that number in the U.S.A. should be a sufficient answer for any worker who is prepared to think for himself.

The poverty of the workers in this country is not due to Free Trade, any more than the poverty of the workers in protectionist countries is due to the tariff policy prevailing there. The workers of the world are poor because they depend for their existence upon means of living which are owned by another class, the capitalists. This class only allows the land to be tilled, minerals to be dug, factories to be run and goods to be



distributed in order that they may make a profit upon the sale of the goods. This profit is possible only because the workers can exist upon very much less than they are capable of producing. Their wages represent the cost of their subsistence, hence cheap food is an advantage, not to them, but to their masters who purchase their energies by the day or the week. The fall in the cost of living since 1920 has not benefited the workers, for wages have also fallen and unemployment increased.

On the other hand, the most formidable competitors which the workers have to contend with are not their fellow-workers either at "home" or abroad, but the machines. Tariffs cannot protect the workers against these rivals. A machine produced in a British town can put men out of work in the same place, and the master-class have more machinery at their disposal than they know what to do with. Hence rationalisation schemes, such as that of the English Steel Corporation, which placed half the village of Penistone on the dole a few months ago. The unemployment in Germany and America is due to similar causes, and not to "foreign goods."

Poverty exists in all lands where the means of producing wealth exist in the greatest abundance. The very conditions of the problem provide the means for its solution. It is for the workers to discover them. It is an obvious paradox that idle machinery should exist side by side with idle men and women whose wants could be satisfied by setting the machinery in motion. This they are ready and willing enough to do, but they are prevented by the fact that the machines are the private property of a class who own and control with the motive of profit. Whenever the surplus product of the workers' labour reaches such proportions that it cannot all be sold, production slackens because profits fall. Unemployment, under such conditions, is inevitable, no matter whether the country be "old" or "new," Free Trade or Protectionist.

The solution for such a situation cannot be found along the lines of supporting any political party which asks for power to administer capitalism, for capitalism, as a system, is responsible for the problem. In order to obtain free access to the means of living, the workers must use their political power to remove the existing legal barriers; in other words, they must abolish capitalist ownership of these means. They must make

the land, factories, railways, etc., the common property of the whole people and establish democratic control over them in the interests of all. That is what the S.P.G.B. means by Socialism.

The change to such a system can only be hindered as long as the workers continue to support demands for tariffs or for cheap food, irrespective of whether these demands are made by sections of the capitalists or by labour leaders of different political groups. In our issue of November last we gave evidence that the Labour Party and the Communist Party, no less than the Liberals and Tories, endeavoured to divide the working class upon this issue during the General Election. Having stood by the Liberals for Free Trade for the greater part of their existence, it is not, of course, surprising that the Labour Party should have wobbled when their tutors wobbled. Prior to the election they showed some indecision on the point, but during the election they came down on the side of Lloyd George and Free Trade. The Communist Party followed suit and demanded, with all the "revolutionary" fervour of which they were capable, "No taxes on the people's food." This is indeed only consistent with the declaration in their 1929 programme ("Class against Class," pp. 29-30):—

"Free Trade has nothing to offer the workers. . . . The demands of the Communist Party consist, therefore, of the following:—

(1) Abolition of all indirect taxes."

It is indeed typical of the Communist Party that it demands with one breath something which it has described as useless to the workers less than five minutes previously; and to make their inconsistency complete, its supporters invariably adopt an air of injured innocence when Socialists describe their actions as anti-working-class.

The S.P.G.B. alone stands for Socialism and points out to the workers the futility of demanding either more tariffs or the abolition of existing ones. It alone consistently opposes all political parties representing the different sections of the master-class, and demands the support of every Socialist.

E. B.

**READ THIS UNIQUE PARTY PAMPHLET.**

**"Socialism and Religion."**

48 pages. TWOPENCE 2½d. post free.

## THE TROUBLE IN THE POST OFFICE.

Every Government in turn has ignored the protests of the Civil Servants against the periodical reductions in pay enforced under the cost-of-living bonus system. The last reduction—agreed to by the Labour Cabinet before its resignation—added to the already deep discontent. In addition to some very well-attended demonstrations, there have, it is said, been local attempts to carry out a "go-slow" policy. The new Postmaster-General, Sir Kingsley Wood, struck sharply at the alleged ringleaders of the Manchester movement, dismissing one and inflicting various punishments on others. The Communists are demanding direct action on a national scale, while the union officials are concerned lest the vigorous action of the P.M.G. should frighten some of the lukewarm members into leaving the union.

There are lessons to be learned from this situation, both for the direct actionists and for the advocates of nationalisation.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is not opposed to trade union action to improve or defend working-class wages and conditions. Such action, at the right moment, can be useful. But it has very definite limits. We live in a capitalist social system, in which the means of wealth production are privately owned and controlled, and in which the owning class have the whole of the forces of society at their disposal through their control of the machinery of Government.

By striking or resisting a lock-out, the industrial workers can, under favourable conditions, secure limited concessions, because their employers do not wish to lose opportunities of profit making. The organised workers cannot, however, by strike action gain possession of the means of production, because the armed forces stand at the back of the employing class. And to talk of the workers fighting the State and its forces is ludicrous. Until the majority of the electorate want Socialism and will organise and vote themselves into control of the political machinery, the workers in each and every industry must accept the facts of the situation and refrain from fruitlessly defying those whose power is immeasurably greater than that of the working-class organisations. If the workers, individually and collectively, ignore this obvious lesson, they do so at their peril.

The Government's own employees are in an even more difficult position than that of the industrial workers. If they challenge their employer, they are directly up against the State itself, and no Government carrying on capitalism, whether it is a Conservative Government or a Labour Government or (as in Russia) a Communist Government, will allow its authority to be challenged inside its own Departments. It is true that the capitalist class can win in any strike if they are prepared to call in the whole of the political power which is at their disposal. In the case of State services, the distinguishing factor in the situation is that the whole political power will always and promptly be used, whereas in outside industrial disputes the employing class as a whole are not always disposed to help the employers immediately affected.

Post Office workers will consequently be well advised to turn a deaf ear to the dangerous Communist talk of a strike to force the hand of the Government. The objections to a "go-slow" policy are practically the same, because at some point or other the authorities can always penalise one or more individuals and thus force the remainder either to strike openly or else to admit their impotence to save the victims.

Another factor in the situation is one entirely ignored by the "direct actionists." Post Office workers, all of them no doubt, resent the reductions in pay, but the majority of them are so far from being prepared to fight the Government, that only two months ago certainly a majority of them, and probably a large majority, voted for the National candidates at the election.

These men and women are clearly not prepared to strike against the Government for which they voted.

Does this mean that the position of Post Office workers is quite without hope? By no means. Even within the limits from which, as Government servants, they cannot at present hope to escape, organisation has its value. It is convenient to the Government to have an organised body to negotiate with, and because politicians find it expedient to place certain restraints on their treatment of their employees, some protection can be secured for the individual against the arbitrary conduct of his immediate superiors, and some concessions in respect of wages and conditions are obtained which would be lost without organisation.

Then there is the much larger question of



Socialism. When Government employees have rid their minds of the poisonous error that nationalised concerns are instances of Socialism, they can begin to grasp the enormous possibilities which will be opened up to them, as to other workers, when the means of production and distribution have been made the common property of society.

The Post Office is not Socialism. It is a capitalist enterprise based on the exploitation of the workers, a source from which the Government obtains profit. This it uses, partly to pay interest to investors in Government loans, and partly to lessen the taxation burden of the capitalist class as a whole. It combines the evils of bureaucratic management with the evils of capitalist ownership and control. It is not deserving of working-class support, for it solves no working-class problem. S. C. T.

#### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in Newcastle, Gateshead and District are requested to note that a Branch of the Party has been formed at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

(See notice on back page.)

Open-air meetings are held every Sunday and Friday in the Bigg Market at 8 p.m., where THE SOCIALIST STANDARD and all Party literature may be obtained.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD is also on sale at the Socialist Bookshop, 25, Royal Arcade, Newcastle.

#### BATTERSEA

##### A MEETING

will be held in the WAITING ROOM

LATCHMERE BATHS

on

Thursday, January 21st, 1932.

Speaker—E. LAKE.

Subject—

#### "The Disarmament Swindle."

Admission free. Non-members invited.  
Questions and Discussions. Commence 8.30 p.m.

#### Sunday Evening Meetings.

Meetings are held at Head Office, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1 (near Boro' Underground Station), every Sunday at 8 p.m. Admission free. Questions and discussion. Non-members invited.

#### AN APOSTLE OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP.

The Right Hon. Herbert Morrison, late Minister of Transport in the Labour Government, has been invited by the Soviet Government of Russia to go there and re-organise the passenger transport system. The *Daily Herald*, in reporting the matter, did not mention whether he accepted the offer. It is a curious commentary, however, on the fact that the Moscow International has for years denounced Ramsay MacDonald and his supporters, while the Russian Government seeks the assistance of one of the most notorious worshippers of MacDonald in Labour Party history.

Herbert Morrison has been very useful here in the Labour Party work of repairing capitalism for the capitalists. Transport is one of the most essential things to the life of great cities. The investing class leave no stone unturned to make it efficient as a profit-making business, whether it is owned privately by shareholders in a company or by stockholders in a municipal or public utility corporation. Political action is one of the methods used by the investors to aid their schemes.

The transport strike under the Labour Government of 1924 was "settled" by the Labour Government passing a Bill asked for by the London Traffic Combine. This London Traffic Act of 1924 enabled the Combine to drive competition out of the field. Even Herbert Morrison (not Right Honourable then) described it as one of the worst Acts ever introduced. In the next Labour Government the critic (Mr. Morrison) was silenced. Mr. Morrison had then become the Minister of Transport.

He took charge of the "nefarious" Act of 1924 and worked it so that capitalist organs praised him for his business capacity in smoothing the path of the traffic companies. Before the Labour Government resigned, he brought forward a London Passenger Transport Bill to combine all concerns working London traffic under a so-called public utility Board. Lord Ashfield, of the Combine, told his shareholders that their stock and interest would be more secure under the Labour Bill than their present shares and dividends. The Bill was a part of the usual work of "Labour" in making the present system more efficient and strengthening it—not abolishing it, as Socialists desire.

The Right Honourable ex-Labour Minister gave a lecture at the Workers' Circle, Aldgate, on December 18th, to explain the wonderful scheme of traffic unification. It was a typical company chairman's speech to shareholders. He deplored the number of empty seats in 'buses, and wished to save the waste of perfectly good empty seats and arrange just enough 'buses for the riders. He also explained that the companies could not spend money on improvements while there was any possibility of competition. The solution was not Socialism or even Nationalisation. Modern Socialists, he claimed, did not favour State operation of services, but business control through public utility boards. The shareholders of the companies were to be given stock, the directors compensated, and interest would be paid.

The idea was similar to the Port of London Authority, so prominent in opposing dock workers and using machinery to supplant them.

The writer asked Mr. Morrison if he did not describe the "publicly owned" Port of London Authority as a Capitalist Soviet. He was further asked to justify his statement that the workers are to be considered, seeing that out of 34 members of the Advisory Board under his Bill, only three would represent the organised workers. The capitalist character of the scheme was exposed, but the Right Honourable "Labourer," in reply, "justified" himself by talking about Russia's need for development and capitalist assistance.

The writer never mentioned Russia or the Communists, but this leading light of capitalist reform thought it sufficient to call him a Communist and ignore the subject of his own address. A. KOHN.

#### LEYTON

##### A MEETING

WILL BE HELD ON

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17th,

At 7.30 p.m.

TRADES HALL, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH RD., LEYTON

Speaker - - - H. MILTON

Subject - The Present Situation and Socialism.

Admission free. Non-members invited.  
Doors open 7.30 p.m. Questions and Discussion.

#### A LETTER TO A WORKER.

Fellow Worker,

If you are interested in politics, economics or trade unionism, you no doubt feel at times the need for accurate knowledge on these subjects. Political discussions are always carried on with more or less heat, and quite frequently there is bad feeling, together with wild charges of dishonesty and misrepresentation. At election times the atmosphere is charged with hostility, and each party is more concerned with damaging the chances of its opponents than with enlightening you.

Nevertheless there is a source of information open to you that is sound and reliable. The works of Socialist thinkers like Marx and Engels may be at first difficult for you to follow; those works, in parts, being of a highly technical character. If you desire to understand your position in modern society it is, perhaps, better to commence with something more elementary: something that is intimately connected with your everyday life. The literature of the Socialist Party of Great Britain is entirely based on the scientific case of Marx, but is simply written and easily understood.

The Party exists for Socialism and makes Socialist knowledge available for the workers. All the publications of the Party are, therefore, issued with this end in view; and you can be sure of accurate information and sound reasoning in all our pamphlets and in each issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

You are probably aware in a vague way that the only remedy for the evils of capitalism is a new order of society, sneeringly referred to by capitalist journalists as the millennium. Now sneers are not argument, and those who sneer are quite unable to inform you how to clear up the mess in any other way but by the establishment of Socialism. In the same breath as their sneers they offer very little hope for any improvement in working-class conditions. Most politicians agree that, in spite of everything that can be done, conditions, instead of improving, tend in fact to grow worse. This is in line with Socialist truth; all the industrial forces that we see operating to-day are tending in that direction, and there is no apparent limit to the depths of poverty and degeneracy to which the workers may not be forced.

In your everyday life you come up against



these forces and are compelled to realise your utter insignificance. You are dependent on fluctuations in trade that are entirely beyond your control. Some new invention that should ease human toil throws you out of a job. With every worker so displaced markets shrink and the stagnation spreads. Your impotence before all this is a tragedy for you, though your masters may be smilingly optimistic about the future. They can afford to wait for the turn of trade. They are sorry, but their sympathy does not feed and clothe you. Nevertheless, we do not blame them. You could do no different if you changed places with them. Just consider for a moment. The bulk of industry is carried on by huge companies, trusts and combines. Those who hold shares in these concerns seldom know anything about the actual business; their knowledge is limited to the amount of dividend payable at the end of each half-year or year.

These conditions are general in every industrial or financial concern. Each concern has a management or directing board that is more or less intimate with technical processes; their chief business being to force the highest possible rate of dividends out of the concern. When you read about companies being formed to exploit oil, rubber, wheat and other things, it is taken for granted by you that these companies make their dividends out of those products. Now, while it is impossible for anyone to produce wealth of any kind without some material substance as a basis, such substances are not dividends and cannot be allocated as dividends. Coal, for instance, in the bowels of the earth cannot be placed to a banking account as dividends. It does not become wealth in any sense until it is brought to the surface: an operation that involves a large expenditure of energy on the part of a number of workers. In short, dividends are produced by the workers, they form a large part of the total wealth produced by them. A knowledge of Socialism enables you to understand why it is that some people in society are shareholders and need not work for a living, while millions cannot find a job and are not permitted to satisfy their needs by producing for themselves. To be a shareholder means to hold certificates of ownership over a definite portion of the means of wealth production. Because shareholders own they are entitled to dividends.

The land and the whole machinery of production and distribution are owned by shareholders in this way. It is the scheme, or basis of the capitalist system. Given that basis, we cannot avoid certain results, and the connection between the two is easily traceable by you. For example, you can easily trace the connection between the private ownership of the means of life and your unemployment.

As your only means of living is to sell your energy for wages, you naturally want wages to be high, but as wages and dividends are part of the same whole, any increase of the one is a decrease of the other, unless the total product is increased. The conflicting interests of workers and shareholders expresses itself in endless strikes and lock-outs all over the field of industry. Society is split definitely along lines of material interests: owners on one side and workers on the other. These opposing interests can never be reconciled while the conditions that have caused them remain.

While the workers fail to understand, they struggle blindly over wages. When they do understand they will carry on a political struggle for possession of the means of life. Thus the class struggle has its origin in conflicting interests that for a long time are capable of more or less satisfactory adjustment. But development of the means of wealth-production makes this adjustment increasingly unsatisfactory, and the workers are forced to see the only solution.

Thus all the problems that puzzle and confuse you in the complicated life of to-day can be easily straightened out, providing you understand the basic principles governing the system of society under which you live. You must not think that because capitalist society appears complicated that it really is so in its fundamental characteristics. It is the conflicting interests between different sections of the capitalist class that make the social machinery appear complex. The interests of financiers, land owners, manufacturers, transport companies and insurance corporations, etc., are so interwoven or conflicting that it would take long to understand and describe them. If you tried to reason which is best for the workers, Free Trade or Protection, you would involve yourself in a vicious circle of argument leading nowhere, and would never understand the capitalist system in itself,

which operates under Free Trade or Protection according to circumstances.

To understand the capitalist system you must study it in the same way that you would study the physical organs of your own body, learning the functions and inter-relations of each. You must take note of the broad facts and the essential things that characterise society. There must be a well-defined meaning in your mind for every word you use. When you speak of the working class you should mean all those who live by the sale of their mental and physical energy, i.e., those who work for wages or salaries. When you speak of the capitalist class you should mean all those who live on surplus value, i.e., the value produced by the workers over and above what they are paid in wages for the production of the whole wealth of society. Understanding these two statements, you will see that all the people in any capitalist country come under one of these two heads: that there are, in the only sense that matters, but two classes in society, the working class, who produce all wealth, and the capitalist, or master class, for whom it is produced, and who pay wages out of that wealth.

Now the existence of a master class presupposes a class in subjection: a slave class. There is no escape from this logic. You may protest that you are free to leave your present master; true, but in most cases you dare not, and even if you do, necessity compels you to find another. Chattel slaves were bought like cattle and driven in the same way; but the driving force behind you is the fact that you can only live by selling your labour-power to someone who owns the means of life.

Lacking the knowledge of greater possibilities of life you tell yourself you are contented with your job, and work with a will, but only by virtue of necessity. Refusal means conditions infinitely worse. From "in work" to "out of work" is a case of "out of the frying-pan into the fire." There is no greater driving force than want. Unemployment and the fear of unemployment goads men till they become machine-like in their efficiency.

These facts are the essential things of your life as a worker. The first and most elementary thing of life is to have access to the means of maintaining that life. Everything else is as dust in the balance. All the

paraphernalia of empire and state are nothing to you if you cannot satisfy your hunger. Trade prosperity means nothing to you if you cannot find a place in the working machinery of production, though the job, when found, is more or less hell. It matters nothing to you whether Germany, France or Great Britain is dominant in the industrial scramble for markets if anxiety continually dogs your steps, and you know that sooner or later you will not be wanted by any employer.

In the factory or the office you do nothing without reason. You understand, wherever you have to use your brain, the meaning of cause and effect. If something goes wrong with the company's machinery, you first look for the cause as a matter of course. Having found the cause, your experience and judgment tells you whether it is a case for adjustment, repairs or replacement. We suggest that the same process should be applied by you in politics and social questions. Capitalism does not deliver the goods. It produces them in abundance, but you do not get them because your wages or unemployment pay will not buy them. First, what is the cause? Second, what is the remedy? Is it adjustment, or reform, or replacement of the system by one more in accordance with working-class needs?

These questions can be reasoned out on sound lines. They are reasoned out in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD every month. If you read it regularly your thinking will become clear. You will no longer be at the mercy of job-hunting politicians. You will be able to analyse every political proposition for yourself with sound judgment. Think it over! F. F.

## SHEFFIELD

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at the  
TRADES HALL (ROOM 6)  
CHARLES STREET

On  
Wednesday, 27th January, 1932.

Speaker—E. BODEN.

Subject

## UNEMPLOYMENT

Admission free. Non-members invited. Questions and Discussion. Commence 7.30 p.m.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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Twelve Months, post free... .. 2s. 6d.  
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**The Socialist Standard,**

JAN.,

1932

**THE PROSPECT OF THE FUTURE.**

At this time of the year it is usual to take stock of the present position and of the possibilities in the near future. It is true that all times of the year are the same from the point of view of the working-class struggle, but the point fixed by the calendar as the beginning of another year is a convenient excuse for a brief survey.

From most aspects the year that has just ended has been one of the best that our Party has had. The increase in membership has been larger than we have ever had in one year before, and it is gratifying to notice that during the past few years the number who have joined each year has been larger than the previous year. A further feature is that the applications for membership are coming from places farther afield than formerly; places that were not accessible to us previously on account of our limited finance.

The sale of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD is steadily growing, and during the past few years there has been a very considerable increase in the number of regular postal subscribers. In fact, at present we have three times the number of postal subscribers that we had three years ago. This is chiefly due to the work of a committee who have developed a new method of making our Party and Paper known throughout the country without making calls on the Party

funds. There is no doubt that a part of the increased membership is also due to their efforts, because working men who carefully read THE SOCIALIST STANDARD and become acquainted with the aims and methods of the Socialist Party of Great Britain are bound to realise, sooner or later, that the path marked out is the only certain way out of wage-slavery.

Although traffic conditions and official interference are yearly increasing the difficulties of holding successful outdoor meetings, we are still able to maintain our outdoor propaganda, and supplement it during the winter with indoor meetings. We also have many requests to place the Party's position before groups of workers.

Our tenderest point is finance, and it speaks much for the spirit of our membership that, in spite of the long industrial depression, we are better off financially than we were a year ago. Of course, we still badly need funds to publish new pamphlets and re-publish old ones, but the fact that we are not deeper in the mire holds out much hope for the future.

Abroad the movement is making genuine progress, and a Socialist International, in the real sense of the words, will, at no very distant date, be an accomplished fact. From time to time we receive encouraging information from our comrades abroad that shows how the principles we advocate are taking root in other countries.

The Socialist Party of Australia is making good progress, holding successful propaganda meetings and debates, and their growing activities have compelled them to look out for larger premises. Occasional articles from them have been printed in these columns.

The Workers' Socialist Party of U.S.A. are still carrying on, in spite of the lack of funds due to the industrial depression in America which compelled them to suspend the publication of their paper for the time being.

Recently we have been advised of the formation of a strong Party in New Zealand based on principles similar to our own and with branches in Wellington and Auckland. The name of the new Party is the Socialist Party of New Zealand, and we print a notice concerning it elsewhere in this issue, to which we would draw the attention of all our New Zealand readers. For the present, lack of finance will compel them to use THE

SOCIALIST STANDARD as their paper, but when funds are sufficient they will publish a paper of their own. May that day be soon!

Apart from the above-mentioned parties, there are supporters of our principles and policy scattered throughout the world (in Canada, for example, there are many) who are working hard, in some cases in isolation, doing the pioneer work towards the founding of other parties to form a part of the Socialist International of the future. It is interesting also to find that our articles find their way into papers in unlikely places. Our attention has been called to the republication of articles in journals in India, Yugo-Slavia, Rumania, France, and elsewhere.

And so we commence another year in a very hopeful and enthusiastic frame of mind. In spite of the work and the power of the enemy and their blind and their unscrupulous tools, knowledge of Socialist principles is spreading both here and abroad. The tide that will sweep slavery and oppression into oblivion is gathering force and coming in; slowly, it is true, but it is coming in. The pity of it is that some of those who did the hard, thankless, and difficult spade-work have "passed out" without seeing the fruits of their efforts.

To those who, while convinced of the soundness of the Party's position, yet do not take the step of joining up or contributing to the funds, we would point out that every additional member and every additional penny increases the propaganda capacities of the Party and brings nearer the time when the working class will capture the seat of power for the introduction of Socialism.

**EAST LONDON****A DANCE**

will be held at

**LIMEHOUSE TOWN HALL,**

ON

**Saturday, January 16th**

In Aid of Party Funds.

ADMISSION 1/6

Time 8 p.m. till 11.30 p.m. Doors open 7.30 p.m.

**THE GOLD STANDARD AND THE CRISIS.**

(Continued.)

(Correction.—In the first of these articles, published in the November issue, it was stated, in the middle of the second column on page 45, that a difference in price levels in two countries on the gold standard would mean that "the value of gold is lower in A than in B." This should have read: "the purchasing power of gold is lower in A than in B." The temporary fluctuations in prices do not indicate a change in the relative values of gold and commodities.)

In a previous article (see November SOCIALIST STANDARD), the writer gave "no" as the answer to two questions he then postulated. The answer to the first, "Was the crisis caused by the failure of the gold standard?" has now to be justified.

In order to clear the ground, it is worth while considering for a moment what those who prate of "the failure of the gold standard" have in mind when they use the phrase. In fact its use is indicative of a belief that in the main the ills from which the world is now suffering are due to monetary causes and would be cured if defects in the monetary machine could be removed. The belief is based on the fact that at a period when other countries have either had great difficulties in maintaining their gold reserves or in some instances (Brazil is an example) have even lost the whole of them, one-half of the world's stock of monetary gold had become piled up in America and a further quarter accumulated in France. From these undeniable facts in the world gold situation, two lines of reasoning have been developed. By some it has been argued that there is an absolute shortage of gold, that the supply is insufficient to satisfy the normal expansion in the monetary requirements of the world, so that, as a consequence, trade is stagnating because there is not enough gold available for business to be carried on. But when the world stock of monetary gold is about £2,000,000,000 and output from the mines is steadily increasing (output in the Transvaal increased by 2.9 per cent. in 1930 as compared with the previous year, and in the first 11 months of 1931 by a further 1.5 per cent. as compared with 1930), there is no need to waste time disproving such an assertion. Attention can



be confined to examining how much truth, if any, lies in the second argument, which is, that the maldistribution of gold between the various gold standard countries has been responsible for the crisis. Before the value of this contention can be judged, it is necessary to examine the case in more detail. The argument of those who hold this view runs something on the following lines.

#### HOW THE OTHER SIDE ARGUE.

America and France have, since the War, become the leading creditor nations. The causes of this are many and various, and need not be discussed here. It is sufficient for the argument that these two countries have been in the position of having large claims on the rest of the world.

So far as America is concerned, her high tariff walls hindered debtors liquidating these claims in goods and services, with the consequence that they had to have recourse to payment in gold. Now, one of the rules of the gold standard is that a movement of gold should, by causing an expansion of credit, raise prices in the gold importing country, and by a converse sequence, lower them in the gold exporting country. The gold that flowed into America after the War, however, was not utilised, at any rate during the last five or six years, as the basis for an expansion of credit. Far from the American price level rising, there was a continuous downward movement. From 1925 the fall was relatively small and gradual until 1929. After that date, however, it became very pronounced. The failure of banking authorities in America to produce a higher price level by expanding credit as gold flowed into the country, which is usually referred to as their policy of "gold sterilization," meant that the normal machinery for reducing international gold movements to a minimum was not working. Consequently, the gold reserves of other gold standard countries were subject to continuous pressure. Further, as all price levels were linked to gold and the purchasing power of gold is determined by that of the dollar (owing to the enormous gold reserves in America), the course of prices in Great Britain, for instance, was dependent upon the movement of prices in America. In other words, producers everywhere had to contend with falling prices. This (so runs the argument) was particularly disastrous for Great Britain, as, owing to the rigidity of wages and other

fixed charges on industry, producers were not in a position to reduce their costs of production proportionately to the fall in prices. Consequently their competitive power was reduced, foreign goods invaded the home market in increasing quantities, and foreign competition drove them out of the export markets. This, in turn, meant an increase in the adverse visible trade balance and a reduction in the amount available for lending abroad, so that debtor countries could no longer rely, as they had done in the past, on being able to borrow for their needs in Great Britain.

The position as regards France was somewhat different. As a result of a large excess of exports during a period of years, France accumulated large funds abroad. French capitalists, prior to 1914, had invested large sums in Russian, Serbian, and other foreign bonds, which the War had rendered valueless. The French investor, in consequence, had become very shy of long-term foreign loans. Funds accumulated abroad, therefore, were not invested at long term, but were in the main left on deposit with banks or invested in short-term securities such as three-months British Treasury Bills. By keeping her foreign balances liquid, France was in a position to demand their repayment at any time. In 1928 she did, in fact, begin to ask for repayment at a steadily increasing rate. From 1929 onwards, her foreign balances were being reduced very rapidly and repatriated in the form of gold.

Although most of the gold which flowed into France during this period came, in fact, out of the reserves of such countries as Spain, Argentina, Brazil and Australia, the repatriation of French balances put great pressure on the London money market and on the sterling exchange. The position that had been arrived at, therefore, was that France and America were drawing to themselves the bulk of the world's gold supply. They were not lending their surplus balances to the debtor countries as the rules of the gold standard required that they should. England was no longer in a position to make loans abroad, and the restrictive credit policy of America was forcing prices downwards. The debtor countries, being unable to obtain foreign loans, on which they relied, were faced with an impossible position, and those of them that were producers of primary products at once began to unload those products in order to obtain funds to meet their obligations. This intensified

the downward tendency of prices, which, once it had started on any scale, soon came to involve all producers in all countries.

The above summarises their argument.

While this is an admittedly incomplete account of the causes leading to the crisis, as they appeared to those whose views we are now considering, it is sufficiently accurate and fair to serve our present purpose. From this analysis of the causes, those who advance these views proceed to argue that if America had not "sterilized" its gold, but had allowed prices to rise and thereby brought about a wider and better distribution of the world's gold stocks, if France had invested her export surplus abroad in the form of long-term loans instead of converting them into gold which was then buried in the vaults in the Bank of France, everything would have been different; world depression would have been avoided, and this country would not have been forced off the gold standard. Is there any justification for this view?

#### WHAT THE BANK DID.

The question of the abandonment of the gold standard by this country on September 21st can be dealt with apart from the general question of the world depression. Before proceeding further, however, it should perhaps be pointed out that, so far as we are concerned, we offer no opinion either for or against that abandonment. We neither consider the departure from the gold standard as the greatest of evils nor as the most blessed of boons. For the moment we are only concerned to consider the event from the viewpoint of those who believe that the destinies of the world are involved.

In their Report, published in June of last year, the Macmillan Committee made it quite clear that they, at any rate, thought the suspension of the gold standard would be a tragedy. They wrote:—

If we need emergency measures to relieve the immediate strain, we should seek them in some other direction (i.e., than departure from an international monetary standard). . . . If this country were to cut adrift from the international system with the object of setting up a local standard . . . we should be abandoning the larger problem—the solution of which is certainly necessary to a satisfactory solution of the purely domestic problem—just at the moment maybe, when, if we were able to look a little farther forward, the beginnings of general progress would be becoming visible.—(Pages 108, 109.)

Further, the fact that the Treasury and

the Bank of England obtained credits abroad during August for a total of £130,000,000 is sufficient evidence that those authorities considered the gold standard something it was vital to preserve. Yet, when the Bank of England suspended payment on September 21st with £130,000,000 of gold in its vaults, it was perhaps natural to expect that it should be declared—as it was declared—that the suspension was the best thing that ever happened and had been forced on the Bank by events outside its control. The Bank claimed that it had fought the good fight, but that the stupidity and faults of others had rendered its efforts useless.

When all the facts are examined, however, there can be no doubt that it was not the unsound banking policy of the Bank of France and the Federal Reserve Board of America that forced this country off the gold standard. In fact, it was not a question of being forced off, but of falling off. The Bank of England failed in its principal function as a central bank because it had consistently pursued an unsound banking policy and had acted in complete defiance of the rules proved by time to be essential for the proper working of the gold standard. The failure of the Bank may have proceeded from ignorance of these elementary rules or from weakness. It is not important to decide the reason. We are content to point out that in their failure the Bank Directors provided another example of the inefficiency of capitalist enterprise and the weakness of that directive ability which is supposed to be the exclusive possession of only a small portion of the community.

One of the first principles of central banking where a central bank is entrusted, as was the Bank of England, with the maintenance of the currency standard of the country, is that if there is pressure on the exchanges and gold is leaving the country in disquieting amounts, the Bank Rate should be raised. It should continue to be raised until the pressure on the exchanges is eased and the drain of gold ceases. The theory is that as the Bank Rate rises, say, in London, other interest rates in the London money market will also rise. This will make the investment of funds in London relatively more profitable than in other financial centres. Consequently there will be a tendency for balances already in London not to be withdrawn, and finally for gold to flow in from abroad as foreigners send their



liquid capital to London to obtain the benefit of higher interest rates prevailing there. The first step the Bank of England might have been expected to take to defend the gold standard in this country was to raise the Bank Rate. This is just what it failed to do. At the beginning of 1930 the Bank Rate was 5 per cent. The crash in Wall Street in October, 1929, the economic disturbances that had already occurred in such countries as Brazil, Argentina and Australia towards the end of 1929, and the large scale movements of gold to France and America—all indicated early in 1930, even if no other warnings had been given, that a period of difficulty was ahead. Yet, despite these warning signs, the Bank Rate was reduced by successive stages until by May 13th, 1931, it was down to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. No increase took place until July 22nd: then the rate was raised to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and again on July 29th to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. On August 1st the Bank of England raised a foreign credit for £50,000,000. Although this was soon exhausted in supporting sterling and a new credit for £80 million had to be raised by the Treasury on August 28th, no further rise in the Bank Rate took place until after the gold standard had been abandoned.

Looking without prejudice at the manner in which the Bank of England handled the situation, it is impossible to acquit it of amateurish bungling. If it was seeking, as it appeared to be, to maintain the gold standard, why did it not utilise its gold reserve and raise its rate to 8, 9, 10 per cent., or even higher, earlier in the year, instead of raising credits abroad and acting in the half-hearted manner in which it did act? As Prof. Gustav Cassel said (see *The Times*, September 23rd):—

If the raising of the discount rate to 6 per cent. is useful now (after the abandonment of the gold standard), it would have been much more effective a month ago. The Bank might have done better to use its gold reserves down to the last ounce rather than stop payment.

Dr. Anderson, the economist of the Chase National Bank, expressed the same view when he wrote (*The Times*, November 19th):—

The collapse of the gold standard in England was absolutely unnecessary. It was the product of a prolonged violation of gold standard rules. Even at the end it could have been averted by a return to orthodox gold standard measures. Great Britain undertook to carry through, in recent years, a cheap money policy, not justified

by her gold position or by the liquidity of her general assets.

In extenuation of the supine handling of the situation by the Bank, its defenders allege that the Bank Rate had ceased to be an effective weapon for the protection of the gold reserve. They endeavour to shift the blame on to the shoulders of the wicked workers, who refused to accept wage reductions, or the foolish foreigners, who lost their heads and insisted on having gold. Unfortunately, Mr. Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, has knocked the bottom out of this argument. In cross-examination before the Macmillan Committee on November 19th, 1930, a date, it will be noticed, before the storm had broken, but when it was apparent to anyone following the situation that a storm was brewing, Mr. Montagu Norman was asked whether "the power which resides in the Bank of England for raising or lowering the Bank Rate was an effective instrument if used for the purpose of preserving the stock of gold?" Mr. Norman's reply was: "It is effective." (Minutes of Evidence, November 19th.) The other argument, that foreigners were so determined to withdraw their balances that there was no height to which the Bank Rate could be raised that would have deterred them, is equally useless as a defence of the Bank. If fears of foreigners regarding sterling were incapable of being allayed, then there was no point in raising the £130,000,000 credit abroad. The obvious policy under those circumstances would have been either to have paid out gold until the reserve was exhausted, or to have abandoned the gold standard two months earlier. By all the rules of the game, the Bank of England failed miserably. Ricardo wrote of the Court of Directors of the Bank of England of his day that "they were ignorant of the principles of currency and did not know how, at such an important moment, to manage the difficult machine which had been entrusted to them . . . they are indeed a very ignorant set." There has apparently been no improvement in the mental equipment of the Court, despite the passage of a century, for Ricardo's remarks of 1821 can be applied equally well in 1931. And yet capitalism has endured through the century. The incompetence of capitalists, even when it goes so far as to aggravate a crisis, does not destroy capitalism. Capitalism survived the blunderings of its fools of the nineteenth century, just as it

will survive those of their twentieth century prototypes.

In a further article the real causes of the world depression will be examined. B. S.

## THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

### MR. GANDHI OPPOSES DEMOCRATIC ELECTION.

We are asked by an Indian reader for our views on the claim that Gandhi represents working-class interests. This is best answered by some statements made by Gandhi.

The *News-Chronicle* reported that Mr. Gandhi, who poses as the friend of the Indian workers, strongly opposed giving the workers a direct Parliamentary vote. The occasion was a meeting of the India Round Table Conference. The *News-Chronicle* (September 18th) says:—

The subject under discussion was the method of election to the All-Indian Federal Government.

Mr. Gandhi came out strongly for an elaborate indirect method of election, in opposition to the so-called moderates like Sir Tej Sapru, Mr. Sastri and Mr. Jayakar, who are in favour of direct democracy.

What Mr. Gandhi wants is a system by which the villager shall elect to a district organisation, the district organisation shall elect to the Provincial Legislature, and the Provincial Legislature shall elect to the Central Government.

The *Daily Herald* of the same date reported other illuminating passages from speeches showing Mr. Gandhi's tenderness for the interests of the exploiting classes in India:—

He felt and knew that the Princes had the interests of their ryots [peasants] at heart.

"There is no difference between us except that we are common people and the Princes are as God has made them—noble men and Princes.

I wish them well; I wish them all prosperity; and I pray that their prosperity and their welfare may be utilised for the advancement of their own dear people—their own subjects.

In British India there should be indirect election. In this he substantially agreed with Lord Peel (a former Secretary for India), who spoke this morning.

He was wedded to adult suffrage; but he would not mind imposing a fee of four annas [about 4½d.] a year for being registered, and other methods designed to keep the voting lists from being too large.

There was no need for special representation either for labour or for landlords.

There was no desire on the part of Congress or of the dumb paupers of India to dispossess landlords of their possessions; but they would have landlords to act as trustees for their tenants.

It should be a matter of pride for the landlords to feel that their ryots—those millions of villagers—would prefer their landlords as their candidates and as their representatives, rather than those coming from other parts, or someone from among themselves.

The landlords would have to make common cause with the ryots—what could be nobler or better than that they should do so?

It is indicative of the non-Socialist character of the I.L.P. that they helped to organise a dinner in honour of this representative of Indian capitalism while he was in England. Ed. COMM.

### THE LABOUR PARTY AND COMMON OWNERSHIP.

A correspondent asks us for our views on a statement made about the S.P.G.B. by a former Labour M.P.

Mr. John S. Clarke, writing in *Forward* (September 12th), argued that the S.P.G.B. ought to support the Labour Party because it is "definitely Socialist," being committed to "communal ownership."

It is true that the Labour Party in its constitution uses the words "common ownership," but the Labour Party certainly does not attach to them their proper meaning. The *London News*, organ of the London Labour Party, in its Editorial (July, 1931) wrote approvingly of Mr. Herbert Morrison's London Passenger Transport Bill. They said that this Bill was a Bill for the purpose of bringing London's passenger transport "under common ownership" and running it "as a public service."

The Bill represents the Labour Party's policy, and the Liberals' and Tories' policy, for Mr. Morrison confessedly modelled it upon previous Liberal and Tory legislation.

It is emphatically not "common ownership." Clause II (1) of the Bill provides for the setting up of an Arbitration Tribunal to see that the present private owners are not deprived wholly or partly of their private ownership. They are to be given bonds in the new corporation valued on the basis of "the average net profits earned . . . for the three financial years last preceding the date of the passing of this Act."

Even Mr. J. Bromley, who is Chairman of the Trades Union Congress declared (*Locomotive Journal*, September) that the Bill is "an absolute negation of



Socialism, and a security of the interest of the capital involved."

Mr. Clarke must try again.

ED. COMM.

## HENRY GEORGE AND CAPITALISM.

We have been asked about the attitude of the late Henry George towards capitalism.

The supporters of the late Henry George and of his proposals for taxing land values sometimes argue as if Henry George was an opponent of capitalism. Actually his single-tax was calculated to help the capitalist, and Henry George made no secret that that was his intention.

In "Progress and Poverty" (p. 288 of the authorised edition) he claimed that his taxation proposals would "increase the earnings of capital."

In "The Condition of Labour" (published by Swan Sonnenschein, 1891) he wrote:—

We have no fear of capital, regarding it as the natural handmaiden of labour; we look on interest itself as natural and just; we would set no limit to accumulation, nor impose on the rich any burden that is not equally placed on the poor. (P. 91.)

Marx had no illusions about Henry George's doctrines. In a letter to a New York friend, written from London on June 20, 1881, Marx discusses "Progress and Poverty" and classes Henry George among those who "allow wage-labour, i.e., the capitalist system of production, to continue, and by juggling with words fool themselves into the notion that by the conversion of the ground rent into a State tax all the ills of the capitalist system of production would vanish of their own accord. In a word, the whole thing is simply an attempt, doused with Socialism, to rescue the rule of capitalism, in fact, to rear it anew upon a firmer basis than its present one."

The letter was published in the "Weekly People" (New York) in June, 1907.

ED. COMM.

## TOOTING.

A MEETING will be held at the  
**LABOUR CENTRE,**  
126, UPPER TOOTING ROAD, S.W.17.  
On Sunday, January 17th, at 8 p.m.

Speaker - - - - - **A. BARKER.**

Subject—

**"SOCIALISM."**

Admission free. All invited. Questions & discussion.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### STARVATION IN AMERICA.

An article in the Conservative *Detroit Free Press* recently has been given wide publicity everywhere. It was quoted in the Senate at Washington and has aroused much controversy. The article was based upon personal investigation in the great city of millionaires and motor-cars.

It stated that in the city receiving hospital every 7 hours and 15 minutes a patient died from starvation. The writer of the article also has a large number of sworn statements from eye-witnesses to the effect that man after man was carried out of Grand Circus Park, the city recreation ground, suffering from intense hunger and exposure. This park, in the very heart of the city, is overlooked by most of the palatial hotels there. It is now full of homeless and penniless men and women who have little to eat and nowhere to sleep.

The extraordinary industrial efficiency and high profits of this great American inferno exist side by side with the largest army of out-of-work and "down-and-outs" American history has ever known. Is it any wonder that the capitalists there are trying very hard to make the writer of the article divulge the source of his information?

Communists and reformers alike want America to adopt the European so-called dole system. They must be completely blind to the misery which at present exists in Europe alongside of the much-vaunted unemployment insurance.

### PROBLEMS OF SOVIET RUSSIA.

Michael Farbman, a frequent visitor to Russia, writes in the semi-official magazine, *The British Russian Gazette and Trade Outlook* (November, 1931). He closes a survey of the Five-Year Plan in agriculture thus:—

But it must not be imagined that they have reached a definite stage in their development. Institutions which involve millions of persons and demand a fundamental change not only of agricultural technique but of social, political and cultural relations, require time to develop. Hundreds of problems are now being raised by this new system: problems of work, the question of the mutual relations between members, the division of profits, the evolution of social, cultural and political characteristics, the relation to the State and to its organs, to other Kolhozi and to individual peasants. These and many other problems are clamouring for solution. It is too early yet to

say in all cases what these solutions will be; but it is perhaps possible to trace some general tendencies. But this must be the subject of another article.

Those who talk glibly of "Socialism in Russia" should note the problems still facing them, as viewed by a very sympathetic observer.

### CHEAPER WARS.

I have often argued in these columns and elsewhere that should a war break out, the Socialist and Labour movement in this country ought to concentrate upon the demand that our Government should meet its war bills out of current revenue. No more borrowing. No more *post obits*. No more tick. No more war debts. Pay as you go. If the wealth is here to waste, very bad, let it be wasted, blown up, destroyed. *But do not let it be borrowed before it is destroyed.*—"Forward," November 28th, 1931.

This utterance comes from the ex-Labour Minister, the Right Hon. Thomas Johnston, the Editor of *Forward*.

This champion of the I.L.P., instead of opposing war and the system that makes for war, simply suggests how war should be paid for.

He assists the capitalists to find the cheapest ways to run their wars without burdening the future capitalists with heavy debt. Not "No More War," but "Cheaper Wars" is this I.L.P. leader's new slogan. Socialists are not concerned in advising the rulers how to run wars. We are engaged in showing the workers how to stop all wars by stopping the cause—production for profit for an idle class.

K.

## SOCIAL & DANCE.

A Social and Dance will be held at the  
**FOOD REFORM RESTAURANT,**  
FURNIVAL STREET, HOLBORN

(Near Chancery Lane Station and the end of Gray's Inn Road).

On **SATURDAY, JANUARY 23rd, 1932,**

From 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Admission - - - **ONE SHILLING.**

Tickets from Head Office or Branches, or from Sec. Social Committee, 52, Parkstead Road, S.W.15.

**PROCEEDS TO PARTY FUNDS.**

## HACKNEY.

MEETINGS will be held in the  
**GREEN ROOM, BROTHERHOOD CHURCH**  
SOUTHGATE ROAD, N.1

Thursday, 14th January . . . . **H. MILTON.**

**"The Passing of the Small Capitalist."**

Thursday, 28th January . . . **W. THOMPSON.**

**"Freedom or Slavery—Which?"**

Admission free. All invited. Commence 8 p.m.  
Questions and Discussion.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.

Readers in Auckland are invited to communicate with the secretary of the newly formed Auckland Branch of the S.P. of New Zealand:—Colin Smith, 97 Grafton Road.

## THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 43rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

### CORRECTIONS.

In the article, "Pillars of the State" (see December "S.S."), owing to a printer's error not observed by us in reading the proofs, the word "a" was inserted before the word "party" in line four of the quotation from a speech by Cardinal Bourne (see page 58). It will be noticed that this materially alters the meaning of Cardinal Bourne's words.

In the article "Rationalising the Petrol Industry," line 2, column 2, on page 63, "cans" should read "cars."

ED. COMM.

### REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.

A. B. (S.E.1).—Suggestions noted. You will find all the questions to which you refer dealt with in our pamphlet, "Socialism," or in the "S.S." during the past 12 months.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA**.—Sec., 2 Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON**.—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.

**GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Cafe, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.

**HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to M. V. Coupland at above address.

**ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.

**LEYTON**.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D. White, 13, Sherdley Road, Higher Crumpsall, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE**.—Sec., Edmund Howarth, 14, Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead. Branch meets every Tuesday, 7.30 p.m., at the Labour Club, Picton Hall, New Bridge Street, Newcastle. Public discussion after branch business. Open-air meetings are held every Friday and Sunday in the Bigg Market at 8 p.m.

**PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting held on alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.

**SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY**.—Sec., W. Mays, 99, Oxford Road, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING**.—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays at "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Secretary, W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM**.—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Rd., N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

**WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN**.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office,



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## "THE HELL OF STEYR."

(From an Austrian Correspondent.)

The name of Steyr is unfamiliar in England. Steyr is an Austrian town in which motor-cars are manufactured, Detroit on a smaller scale, and it is significant that the appearance of an article in the Detroit Free Press on the conditions of the workers in the American auto-industry should have almost coincided with the publication in a Vienna paper of a report under the above heading from their correspondent in the Austrian city of motor-cars. The workers of Steyr, like those of Detroit, are a law-abiding, industrious, hard-working lot, but under capitalism these virtues do not guarantee either sustenance or security to the workers. As one of our speakers, now dead, used to put it to his audiences when analysing the effects of the capitalist system: "It comes to this," he used to say, "the better you are and the harder you work, the worse it is for you in the end." Steyr as well as Detroit have proved the truth of this assertion. The workers there have attained an extraordinary degree of efficiency in motor-car making with the result that within a relatively short time all the markets were glutted and work had to be suspended. Under capitalism, increased efficiency has the consequence that while the companies have amassed huge fortunes for themselves, the workers' lot has gone from bad to worse until it has, on the masters' own showing, become a veritable hell!

The Vienna newspaper, "Sonn-und Montagszeitung," in its issue for January 4th has a long report from its representative who made a special visit to Steyr. The newspaper writes:—

"One has been quite accustomed to the daily desperate calls for help coming now from this, now from the other working class quarter, but the signal of alarm,

'A City Dying of Starvation,' makes one look up. It comes from the second largest city of Upper Austria. The Mayor of Steyr at the last meeting informed the city council that of the 22,000 inhabitants about 11,000 are without any income whatever, that 90 per cent. of all the children are underfed and that a large proportion of the population are simply compelled to go begging. The correspondent says that one must have been in Steyr to realise what is concealed behind these figures. 11,000 tragedies in one small city which has become a city of beggars. You are accosted at every street corner by swarms of children—tiny, pale creatures in thin rags and torn shoes who surround the passing stranger with outstretched hands, wailing and imploring. They enter the shops begging for money or something to eat. And there are also young people and old women. In the Municipal poor house there are 328 aged people who now have to go out into the streets too, once a week, to supplement their scant rations by begging. And so do the inmates of other municipal institutions. Friday is the principal day set down for general begging and thousands of people go begging on that day in Steyr.

### BEDS WITHOUT BEDDING.

"The greater part of the unemployed, and those who are no longer in receipt of the dole, do not live in houses, but in wooden barracks. The conditions there are described as simply appalling. Twelve persons were found to live in one room with three beds without bedding, which had all been sold long ago. All sleep on straw, the wife and the husband



and 10 children. They eke out their existence between the four wet walls, the inevitable clothes line drawn across the room with wet clothing. The big boys and girls sleep side by side and next to the parents, with two little children in one bed, without bedding. They sleep as long as possible in order to suppress the pangs of hunger, many also have no shoes. On New Year's night a woman was confined in a room of the barracks in the presence of her four other children. In another barracks a woman with two children tried to take her 'life'; she had been dismissed from the works two days previously and was not entitled to the dole, so she took prussic acid. Other families live in what were formerly stables. A canal with stagnant water runs outside and the barracks are infested with rats and mice.

#### DOGS FOR DINNER.

"Here and there in the barracks the correspondent saw remnants of what used to be toys, but the children, he says, do not play. They are hungry and cold. Also they have lost their favourite playmates—the dogs. Formerly there were hundreds, but they have nearly all disappeared within a year, in Steyr. Nobody will openly say what has become of them, but everybody knows that in this city of starvation the dogs have been killed and eaten.

#### CHILDREN CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

"The Municipality, a bankrupt municipality, has the care of 1,100 children who have lost their father or whose parents are divorced. 'The state of health of the population is simply alarming,' said Dr. Pimiskern. 'In a year I have treated 5,000 patients free of charge. Consumption plays havoc in the town. The children are nearly all ill; at least 90 per cent. are underfed; at school examinations I find only skeletons. No flesh, no blood, only skin and bones, and when asked, it is invariably the same answer: nothing to eat. I treat many children who have not seen any meat for months. A boy in the first class did not know what meat looks like, he had never eaten any.'

"It goes without saying that under such conditions a normal school service has become impossible. The dilapidated

school rooms serve as mere places in which to keep warm. Half of the children cannot attend for lack of shoes, others have only torn ones and insufficient clothes.

"The Works now employ only 1,700 people, whereas more than 15,000 are dependent on work there. Another 300 were about to be dismissed. 'With the dole,' the correspondent says, they will be 'alright' for a time. They are envied by those who are no longer in receipt of any benefit and only get 42 groschen (4½d.) per day poor relief—42 groschen!

"366 persons are daily given a meal in the canteen of the Steyr Works. A thousand present themselves every day, but there are only 366 soups, the daily portion, consisting of cabbage and a piece of bread; sometimes they get a piece of meat. The correspondent describes how he watched an old worker eating but half of the contents of his basin, food that would barely have sufficed a child. When asked, he replied that the other half was to be taken home. 'How many are there at home?' asked the correspondent. 'Wife and three children,' was the answer, and he pressed the basin closer to himself and sought to get away; others barred him the way, begging of him, begging of the beggar!

"This is what the tourist guide book says about the picturesquely situated city of Steyr: 'A lovely place on the meeting place of the River Steyr with the River Enns, with 22,000 inhabitants, tall chimneys and a Gothic church,' to which the correspondent added: 'with 11,000 beggars, with 15,000 starving, with 18,000 persons destitute, tall chimneys that have not smoked for years, chimneys of idle factories. The industrial city of Steyr has become the hell of Steyr, an Austrian 'devil's island' of decent, honest men, ready and willing to work.'

The paper added, of course, the usual appeal to its readers for help, though it confessed at the same time that charity is no solution. The editor did not give a remedy, but there are, of course, numerous political parties and crowds of professional politicians, chiefly coming from the so-called "intellectuals," always ready with "remedies" and "reforms," with "demands" and programmes supposed to cope with economic ills, and generally pre-

tending to represent the interests of the workers. Every one of these remedies has been found to be a fraud, a farce and a delusion, while some of them have turned out to be worse than the disease.

#### SOCIALISM THE ONLY REMEDY.

There is ONE remedy for all the evils of working class existence, and ONE only—it is the solution which the science of Marx and Engels made plain, but which it does not pay the "leaders of labour" to propagate. For that task the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its companion parties in other countries have been established. We insist that these evils are all part and parcel of, and inseparable from, the present social order—capitalism—a system of society in which the means of wealth production are owned and controlled by a small section, on whom the mass of the people are dependent. These evils will persist and grow unless and until the working class, organised in the Socialist Parties, make an end to private ownership, so that no individual will be dependent on another private individual for his material subsistence. Under Socialism, such absurdities as poverty in the midst of plenty, which is the outstanding feature of capitalism, will be unthinkable, because society will produce all human comforts and conveniences for USE only and not for profit. The product of men's hands will then cease to play tricks with them, and the further improvement of machinery, which spells wreck and ruin to the workers to-day, will then only increase the real well-being of all. We insist that no proposition can be sound and worthy of working-class support that respects the present social order and does not aim at the destruction of a system that deprives millions of people of a chance of earning a living, that humiliates and degrades, and drives thousands to despair and suicide. Any proposition that does not establish equal right for all to the means of life, deserves nothing but the contempt of the workers.

The workers of Steyr and of Vienna have had an object-lesson which should open their eyes. Putting their trust in leaders—who are the curse of working-class organisations—they elected a majority of Social-Democrats to the two city councils, with the result that after 12 years of such administration Steyr is now "a city dying of starvation," while Vienna—a city of under

2 million inhabitants—has the dreary record figure of over 120,000 unemployed, over 3,000 suicides in the past year, and more beggars than ever before.

Workers of the world! It is high time to bestir yourselves! Rid yourselves of your illusions and of your leaders! Join our ranks and so leave your mark to posterity as men and women of whom they will be able to say that you assisted in the great task of ridding the Earth from the fangs of the monster incubus of capital!

FRANK.

#### THE ENORMOUS UNEMPLOYMENT IN FRANCE.

For many years the advocates of birth control as a cure-all for social and economic problems have pointed to France as a proof of their claim that unemployment and poverty can be abolished by the limitation of the number of births. In THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for August, 1930, we examined this claim and showed that the theory is unsound. We pointed out that France had not solved the problem of working-class poverty, and that unemployment had not been abolished. It was the absence of statistics, not the absence of unemployment, which made the claim appear to have foundation. Unemployment in France was for a time kept relatively low by the demand for workers to rebuild the devastated areas.

We then confidently foretold a big increase in unemployment, and recent reports fully confirm our view. The following appeared in the *Star* (January 9th, 1932):—

The French Ministry of Labour, issuing its weekly unemployment return, estimates that there are 2,500,000 persons wholly or partly unemployed in the country, says the British United Press.

A total of 161,773 persons (130,141 men and 31,632 women) is in receipt of national relief, and 52,628 are receiving municipal relief.

The total of those receiving relief is thus 214,401, as compared with 196,751 last week, and 24,266 in the corresponding period of last year.

According to the French Federation of Trade Unions (see *New Statesman*, January 16th), the number is even larger, being 3,000,000. Most of them are not entitled to relief.

G.

#### PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

Value, Price and Profit	..	Post free.
Causes of Belief in God	..	Marx. 7d.
	..	Lafargue. 1d.



## ATHEISM, RELIGION AND SOCIALISM.

### ECONOMICS AND ATHEISM.

Mr. Chapman Cohen, the Editor of the *Freethinker*, is an "advanced" thinker who described Communism as the religion of Russia. He builds up his argument on the insistence on certain kinds of teaching in Russia, to the exclusion of any other ideas whatever.

Mr. Chapman Cohen, however, has no ground for calling this Communism, and uses this term as loosely as any Christian could do.

The limited point of view of Freethought was indicated by him in the *Freethinker* (November 1st, 1931).

He says that Conservatism, Liberalism, and Capitalism are equally atheistic with Socialism.

Atheism, or Freethought, then, is limited to the opposition to religion. Freedom of thought and freedom of expression, however, cover a wider field than a negation of religion. Any Freethinker who applied his free thinking to social life would find that the basis of freedom is economic. Those who control our livelihood are in a position to repress our activities and to compel us either to keep quiet or lose "our" jobs. This brings the Freethinker up against the question of material conditions.

At a lecture at Great Alie Street Forum, London, on December 12th, Mr. Cohen vigorously denied that the workers were struggling to-day for bread and butter. The struggle to-day, he said, was psychological. All the efforts of workers to get better things or to make their livelihood secure were not material, but a product of higher mental states. Reason, not economics, was the guide, according to the Apostle of Atheism.

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND ATHEISM.

The driving force of history was not material conditions, but mind. Mary Baker Eddy, the Christian Scientist, and Chapman Cohen, the Freethinker, find a common ground in their ideas. In fact, all believers in religion ridicule the materialist conception of history on the same grounds as the "Freethinker"; they all say that the material conditions of wealth production and distribution are not the cause of social change. They argue that changing mental concepts are the fundamental cause of social change. In reply to questions, Mr. Cohen asserted that he was putting forward good

Socialist arguments in describing all ideas as social in origin. The cause of mental changes, according to him, was to be found in social, not material, conditions.

He was faced by the argument that if the struggle for better things to-day was psychological, then we could get the things we wanted by leaving it to psychological effort.

Actually, every student of social affairs knows that the changed conditions and social freedom we want depend upon control of material things—wealth, money, food, clothing and shelter—that is, access to the means of living.

### WHAT ARE SOCIAL CONDITIONS?

Social conditions are the cause of mental change. True. But what are social conditions? According to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, they are the ideas, religions, politics, institutions, newspapers, churches, property, in fact everything in society. The dominant force in social conditions among men is mind, he said. Among animals it was food, clothing and shelter. Men are different; they have got beyond the animal stage. Men are idealists; animals are not.

Typical of the superstition of the Freethinker, as such, the lecturer idolised reason, but failed to see that material conditions determine, in the long run, the things we reason about and the success or otherwise of ideals held by men. The reasoners before the French Revolution idolised liberty, freedom of contract, absence of authority, and equality. The conditions of French feudalism repressed capitalism and gave rise to these ideas. The nature of the material conditions made the victory of the Revolution limit the liberty and fraternity to the bourgeois virtues of freedom for the capitalist and repression for the worker.

### THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND FREETHOUGHT.

Those who apply their Freethought and evolutionary ideas to social life find that the basis of all social conditions is material. The conditions of wealth production and distribution form the foundation of modern society. From this foundation the class divisions and struggles arise and develop. The class struggle is never mentioned by the Atheist, who is too busy with abstractions and abstract ideas to deal concretely with social life.

The class struggle is a product of the material conditions and becomes the greatest driving force in social evolution.

Atheist or theist, rationalist or materialist—if they belong to the working class—are compelled to accept the terms of the owning class in order to live. Their daily life is limited by their economic position as a class without property, compelled to struggle for a bare "living wage." Their ideals, their hopes and ambitions are denied expression if these conflict with the interests of the property-owning class.

Whether we like it or not, "sordid" materialists or æsthetic idealists though we may be, we are compelled to occupy our lives with the first, the essential thing in life—the securing of the wherewithal to live. That brings us up against the owning class. When we understand the struggle as well as take part in it, our object will be to get control of the material means of production. Only then will freedom of thought become a reality instead of the present sham.

### "THE RELIGION OF RUSSIA."

The Rationalist lecturer, Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe (of the *Manchester Guardian*) has recently returned from Russia and lectured on a recent Sunday at Conway Hall on "The Religion of Communism." The *Monthly Record* of the institute gives a summary of his lecture, from which the following is an extract:—

To consider the differences between Communism and Christianity, the Communists believe the universe to be without a God and man to be without a soul; they believe in class-hate, in the class-war, in dictatorship as a means to an end, and in the subjection of the individual. Marxism stands for a negation of the quintessence of the old religions—charity, compassion, forgiveness, the contrite spirit, the elevation of the humble and the meek. It is important to realise the width of the chasm that separates Marxism from the spirit of Buddha or of Christ. One may see this in the manner in which the Russians have set themselves to liquidate prostitution, for their object is not the redemption of the individual but the elimination of a social evil.

Mr. Ratcliffe has for many years been prominent on the lecture platform, especially in his yearly tour of American cities. The quotation given here shows that little knowledge is required to be a lecturer to Liberals and Rationalists.

He takes his Marxism from the present situation in Russia and labels the struggle there, the "Communist Religion." Charity, forgiveness, etc., are foreign to Marxism, according to this supporter of the Great War.

Marxism is a word used to mean the

teachings of Marx. Is there anything in Marx opposed to human kindness and the other elements of developed social life? On the contrary, the essential idea of Marx is to teach the workers to end this class-riven society which makes for cruelty, servility and repression. Marx taught that economic necessity demands a co-operative commonwealth. Then the social feelings would be liberated instead of being crushed in the struggle for existence.

### RATIONALIST ILLUSIONS.

Mr. Ratcliffe finds that under the powerful State-controlled machine of Russia the individual is subjected. He does not understand that the economic and mental development of Russia to-day does not allow Socialism to be established, apart altogether from the fact that there can be no such thing as National Socialism. The subjection in Russia under dictatorship can only be judged by an examination of the rise of Bolshevism to power and the conditions which gave it birth. If Mr. Ratcliffe knew anything about Marxism or Socialism, he would not expect Communism to rise "in a night" out of the nightmare that was Czarism.

He does not even realise that prostitution is an economic question. He evidently thinks that women sell themselves for money because their hearts are wicked or that they are born in sin. The Russians should "redeem the individual" women by inviting the Salvation Army or the Ethical Society to save their souls. Perhaps Mr. Ratcliffe explained to Stalin how prostitution is "liquidated" in democratic Britain and America.

In a later lecture at the Conway Hall on the "Clash of Systems," Mr. Ratcliffe criticised Russia's lack of freedom of speech. He claimed it was inherent in Socialism. The fundamental difference between State Capitalism in Russia and Socialism as advocated by Marx is evidently quite unknown to him. A. KOHN.

## LEYTON

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at

TRADES HALL, GROVE HOUSE,  
HIGH ROAD, LEYTON

on Sunday, February 21st, 1932.

Speaker - A. SMITH

Subject - "Socialism and Politics."

All invited.  
Questions and Discussion.

Admission free.  
Commence 7.30 p.m.



### A BOOKLET ABOUT THE GOLD STANDARD.

An interesting little booklet, entitled "All About the Gold Standard," by Lawrence Ludford, has recently been published, at 1s., by Newhall Press, Birmingham.

In general, it is well written and clearly expressed, but the writer appears to be unaware of the class basis of society, and falls into the old trap of speaking of England and other countries as if the whole of the people in one country had the same interest in whatever policy was pursued.

We are told that "it requires but little thought to see that gold must be better distributed if the countries of the world normally using the gold standard are all to return to it, and if gold is to be used in the best interests of the industry and commerce of the world." This phraseology is characteristic of some of the muddle-headed economists who are supposed to be our guides. A first comment is that it requires something more than thought to accomplish this re-distribution of gold. Does Mr. Ludford think that, because he says that gold should be better distributed, the American capitalists will oblige him by exporting some of it to European and Asiatic banks? "In the best interests of the industry and commerce of the world" is equally vague. It is time the author realised that each individual is guided in his actions primarily by his own self-interest, and that the "industry and commerce of the world" are in reality nothing but a combination of the interested actions of capitalists and capitalist undertakings in each country. If, therefore, he thinks it better in the interests of each capitalist undertaking that gold should be better distributed, it is for him to show to the American and French capitalists that it is in their interest to purchase as much foreign goods as possible and to invest their money in undertakings in foreign countries. Apart from Germany, whose industry is already heavily mortgaged to British and American capitalists, it is not clear where they could do this with safety to themselves, and if they could have done so, there is not much doubt but that they would have done it without waiting for Mr. Ludford's advice.

He remarks again on page 26 that the huge store of gold acquired by America has not benefited that country. Doubtless he refers to the fact of the 10,000,000 un-

employed in the States. Evidently it has not benefited the workers, but someone must be the owners of this gold, and presumably they must find some satisfaction in keeping it, or they would chuck a few millions about the world in order to oblige the theorists of the "mal-distribution of gold" school.

Some play is made of Winston Churchill's statement that "the gold has been dug up out of a hole in Africa and put down in another hole that is even more inaccessible in Europe and in America." We wonder, if Mr. Churchill had £1,000,000 surplus cash and had satisfied his every want and all new avenues of investment were doubtful, whether he would take the advice of some economist who told him that in the interests of the industry and commerce of the world he should send it abroad. We rather think that Mr. Churchill would prefer to keep it in the bank. This is just the position of the American capitalists and bankers who are to all intents and purposes the owners of the scapegoat gold.

The example of the pre-war British bankers and financiers, who "understood the rules of the gold standard game," is held up as an example to American bankers and financiers. The author says that British exports exceeded imports before the War, and the balance was used to "create credit." This is another of those vague phrases used to delude the workers. It means that the British capitalists invested some of their profits in foreign enterprises. In other words, they invested part of the surplus value created by British workers in the colonies and in South America, etc. The author continues: "Events have carried a portion of the former power of England's bankers and financiers into the hands of others, and their successors have not understood the game as they understood it." But all good things come to an end, even for the capitalists, and as many of the profitable fields of investment have for the moment dried up, it is unlikely that they will follow the advice of an economist who tells them to "play the gold standard game" and invest their money abroad. What should they invest it in? Let Mr. Ludford supply the answer.

We are given a real inkling into the minds of the master class when we are told on page 30 that "if, when England returns to the gold standard, she stabilises her £ again at 20s., it is unlikely that she will do so until domestic prices and wages have

been brought to the same level as those of the rest of the world."

It is of no interest to the workers whether a country is on or off the gold standard. The gold in the French and U.S. banks represents some of the surplus wealth wrung from the workers and appropriated by the master class. No manipulation of currencies will improve the lot of the workers, whose only hope, under capitalism, is for work, work, and still more work. Whilst some of the workers are tearing their guts out every day of the week, the others are eking out a bare subsistence on a miserly dole.

The cause of the misery of the workers is the ownership by one class of the means of production. Let the workers organise to capture political power and appropriate the means of production, and the miseries and indignities which they suffer under capitalism will come to an end once and for all.

R. M.

### MR. CLIFFORD ALLEN ON THE LUST FOR POWER.

Mr. Clifford Allen, one of the products of the I.L.P., who was recently raised to the peerage for services rendered, once made a speech at an I.L.P. Summer School, a speech which he might with interest read now. It was reported in the *Daily Herald* on August 25th, 1924:—

Politicians are more concerned about applause, power, and appreciation than about principles and policy, declared Mr. Clifford-Allen, when lecturing at the I.L.P. Summer School, Scarborough, yesterday. The reason, he said, was that they were afraid of what was called public opinion.

Consequently, Governments thought in terms of keeping in power, rather than in administering according to their principles. He sometimes thought it would be a good thing if politicians, like the actors in ancient Greece, wore masks, and were judged on their principles and policy solely. This might restrain the instinct for power. It would be a good thing if M.P.s, on their return home each evening, would think for a few moments, and ask themselves if anything they had done in Parliament that day was of benefit to Democracy.

H. C.

### DEBATE WITH THE I.L.P.

The report of a debate with the I.L.P. which took place at Newcastle-on-Tyne on January 14th will be published in the March issue.

### LIST OF DONATIONS.

West Ham Branch, 10s.; Hull, 10½d.; Golding, £1 3s. 6d.; T. H. B., 5s.; Colindale, 1s.; Tooting Branch, 5s.; Hull Branch, 10s.; W. M., 2s. 4d.; G. C. G., 3s.; West Ham Branch, £4; A. Banker, 2s. 6d.; J. Smet, 2s.; Islington £2; Bird, 6s. 9d.; Cannell, 4s.; J. E. Ramsay, 7s. 6d.; Thurlow, 2s.; Islington 5s.; F. J. H., £1; T. J. L. H.B., 10d.; Whitman, 5s.; Knights, 5s.; S. Harris, 3s. 4d.; Q., 6d.; G. R., 1s.; J. M. Bridges, 2s.; Central Branch, 8s.; Birmingham Branch, 9s.; V. Wilson, 2s. 6d.; J. E. Lee, 2s. 6d.; W. G. F., 9d.; B. Trake, 2s. 6d.; B. Koan, 10s.; W. S. Ter, 10s.; J. Wade, 2s.; H. Banker, 2s.; W. Bailey, 2s. 6d.; H. G. H., 6d.; W. Oloman, 10s.; M. Yates, 2s. 6d.; S. Goldstein, 1s. 6d.; J. S. Cannell, 1s. 6d.; J. E. Roe, 2s. 6d.; J. Robinson, 9d.; J. T. of Richmond, 2s. 6d.; S.E., 2s.; S. A. Allison, 10s.; H. Scott, 6d.; W. J. B., 4½d.; G. V., 1s. 6d.; F. J. Smith, 2s. 6d.; Hull Branch, £1; Leaflets, 8d.; H. G. H., 3d.; W. Quelch, 5s.; Colindale, 1s.; R. Martin, 2s. 6d.; J. Robinson, 9d.; H. B. Flanders, 9d.; McLean B., 6d.; Glasgow Branch 15s. 9d.; K. G., 2s. 6d.; M. J. Crook, 1s.; H. C. Bull, 1s.; J. K., 1s.; G. E. S., 2s. 6d.; A. F. F., 2s. 6d.; G. R., 3s.; R. F., 2s.; W. E. B., 2s.; Saunderson, 2s.; East London Branch, 10s.; Birmingham, 5s.; T. Fry, 1s. 8d.; Zamoru, 1s.; H. M., 5s.; V. Pryce, 1s.; Forest Gate, 9s. 6d.; Wilson, £1; G. B., 10s.; G. Math, 5s.; S. T. Willets, 4s.; Snel, £1; W. M. Penny, 1s.; Hackney Branch, 2s. 6d.; H. M. N. I., 1s.; Tooting Branch, 7s. 4½d.; F. Goldsworthy, 2s.; Sheffield Branch, 7s. 6d.; F. H. B., 2s. 6d.; Staff, 2s.; Becontree Symp., 2s. 6d.; Notts, 1s.; Littler, 9d.; A.E.W., 6d.; Colindale, 1s.; C. M., 2s.; A. J. P., 4s.; Wood Green Branch, 15s.; F. J. S., 1s.; J. K., 1s.; E. B., 2s. 6d.; Penny, 1s.; R. S., 1s. 9d.; G. Jackson, 10s. 3d.; G. Stephens, 2s. 6d.; J. W. Crisp, 7s. 6d.; S. Cannell, 2s. d.; T. C., 2s. 6d.; G. C. G., 6s.; A.S., 3d.; West Ham Branch, £5; J. Sparks, 2s. 6d.; J. Smith, £1—Total, £35 10s. 9½d.—Special Effort, Christmas, 1931, £48 18s. 1d.—Total, £84 8s. 10½d.

Send donations to Treasurer at 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

### NEWCASTLE - ON - TYNE

PUBLIC LECTURES will be given on TUESDAYS

AT THE LABOUR CLUB,  
PICTON HALL, NEW BRIDGE STREET  
By EDMUND HOWARTH

Feb. 2nd .. "The Fraud of Reform."  
Feb. 9th .. "The Socialist Attitude to War."  
Feb. 16th "The Socialist Party and Trades Unions."  
Feb. 23rd .. "The Futility of Direct Action."  
Mar. 1st "The Materialist Conception of History."

Admission free. All invited.  
Commence 8.30 p.m. Questions and Discussion.

### ECCLES.

A new Branch has been formed at Eccles. Members and sympathisers are asked to communicate with the Secretary, MRS. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free.. .. 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. 1s. 8d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

FEB.,



1932

**THE RENT STRIKE STUNT**

The Independent Labour Party, like all reform parties, is constantly faced with the need to discover a new programme to hide the failure of all the old ones. Family Allowances and the Living Wage Scheme are already fading from the picture and going the way of nationalisation, bulk purchase, housing schemes, rationalisation, trade boards and all the rest of the junk that has served the purpose temporarily of keeping alive the illusion that the I.L.P. is doing something and getting somewhere. At the moment the nationalisation of the banks is sharing the honours with public utility corporations and with the latest stunt, a "rent strike." The I.L.P. are backing the London and Manchester Trades Councils in a demand that, wages having fallen, rents should be reduced. The I.L.P. has, time after time, pointed to Vienna as a city where their ideal of low rents has operated to perfection, and they have talked of the millions of pounds supposed to have been saved to the workers by the Rent Restriction Acts in this and other countries. The whole of it is based on illusion.

Rents were kept low here and in every European country at the instigation of the employers. They knew that high rents would raise the workers' cost of living and leave the employers to face either lowered efficiency among their wage-slaves or the

alternative of paying a larger wage. Rent restriction has lowered the average cost of living, and wages on the whole have fallen proportionately, leaving the workers just where they were before. Even where this policy of plundering landlords to help industrial capitalists has been carried to its furthest point, as in Vienna, the workers were not the gainers, but their employers. In 1925 the International Labour Office published the results of an inquiry into rents, wages, etc., under the title "The Workers' Standard of Life in Countries with Depreciated Currency." The Report dealt especially with the effects of rent restriction.

Writing of Germany, it says:—

Since wages no longer had to cover rent, the cost of labour was correspondingly reduced. (P. 37).

In other words, the employers reaped the advantage. In Austria the same thing was found by the investigators:—

Most of the workers were in the same position as those in Germany; they had practically no liabilities under the heading of rent, but the corresponding amount was not included in their wages. The actual gain was thus nil. (P. 97).

The Report continues:—

Industry, on the other hand, benefited, as in Germany, by the reduction in the cost of most labour by the full amount which rent represented in wages before the war. (P. 97).

In Great Britain the policy of rent restriction has had the further defect that it has badly hit the section of workers who have had to get into houses whose rents have been "decontrolled." The average wage has not allowed for the exceptionally high rents in decontrolled houses, and these individuals have been the sufferers.

The only sound policy for the working class under capitalism is to use whatever strength their economic organisation can give them to press for higher pay from the employers, not to lend themselves to stunt campaigns whose only result will be to make reputations for a few Labour leaders, and help the industrial capitalists to secure more profit. The workers should, however, face up to the limits of Trade Union action. Socialism is the only remedy for the workers' poverty problem, and Trade Union action cannot bring about Socialism.

Returning to this latest I.L.P. stunt, we read in *Forward* (December 26th) an amusing account of what happened some years ago in the last Clydeside rent strike. Mr. David Kirkwood, M.P., made a fighting speech in which he said that there would be no evic-

tions in Clydebank "except over my dead body." In spite of this, as his local critics complain, the evictions took place, but the "dead body" goes about—talking as usual.

**THE CAUSES OF A FALL IN PRICES.**

A reader in Detroit (U.S.A.) sends the following question:—

In the November issue of THE STANDARD it is said:—

Movements in the value of gold will be accompanied by corresponding changes in the purchasing power of the currency unit. *As the value of currency reflects itself in the form of prices this is the same as saying that, under the gold standard, if the value of gold falls, prices will rise, and the amount of commodities which can be purchased with a pound will diminish.* Conversely, if the value of gold rises, prices will fall.

Please tell me what happens when we have an economic crisis. Between the months of October, 1929, and January, 1930, let us say that no alteration has taken place in the productivity of tailoring. Let us say that the price of a certain type of suit drops from £10 to £5. Let us say that during the same period, without any perceptible change in the socially necessary labour time, the price of commodities in general also sell on an average at a price level of one-half in the month of February from which they sold in the month of October. Let us say that the same amount of gold is produced in the same socially necessary labour time in the month of October. This being true, how can we reconcile the proposition that price levels would tend to move up or down together in accordance with changes in the value of gold? I know very well that over-production is the primary cause of economic depressions, and that, due to the inability of manufacturers and merchants to sell their commodities at a profit, is the cause of the fact that the circulation of money is lessened, but this in no way explains why the prices of commodities should fall when there has been no relative change in the meantime between the socially necessary labour time required in the production of commodities and gold.

("H. G.")

**REPLY.**

The above question, under various forms, is often asked in periods of a great slump and also great "prosperity." Great price variations cause endless theories to be ad-

vanced as to the cause of the changes in prices.

The question raised here does not involve the changing value of gold. The time taken to produce gold and the total amount produced varied but little during the months mentioned by the questioner. He refers to the period of four months which was practically the beginning of the present period of American depression. If gold did not increase in value in that time, due to more socially necessary labour time being required to produce it, what, then, caused the fall in price of other commodities?

Price is the money name of the exchange value of articles. Goods express their values in the commodity gold, which becomes a standard of price. Prices, therefore, may vary or fluctuate, due to changes in the values of articles; that is, the reduction or increase of the time necessary to produce under prevailing social conditions.

The prices of all articles fall when there is a rise in the value of gold resulting from more labour having to be embodied in gold; conversely, the price of all articles rises when less labour time is needed to produce a given quantity of gold.

Apart from these causes of price changes, the variations in supply and demand cause fluctuations in the prices of articles.

The sudden and rapidly increasing crisis in America in 1929 caused very violent changes in the price level. Heavy speculation in commodity production and the vast increase of productive power and products caused tremendous over-production. The world economic crisis, due to the anarchy of production, manifested itself on the largest scale in America because there production was highest. Tremendous stocks of goods on hand—supply vastly exceeding demand—manufacturers needing ready money—these factors resulted in a slump in prices—a heavy fall in price within a short period. Ten millions out of work and many more millions on "lower" wages compelled manufacturers not only to sell stocks "low," but later to produce a cheaper line of goods, using cheaper raw materials and the most intense labour-saving methods. Seventy-five dollar (£15) suits went by the board, and 25 dollar (£5) suits became the type saleable. The accumulation of raw materials—cotton, wool, etc.—caused their price to fall heavily, and thus manufacturers could produce cheaper. Labour power is cheaper with greater com-



petition for jobs, and thus another means of saving the manufacturers' costs.

Briefly to sum up in reply to the question, the real reason for the heavy fall in prices as pointed out by the questioner is in the relations of supply and demand. When the stocks of goods are exhausted and demand continues, prices will rise, unless means are found of reducing costs of production, or unless cheaper substitutes are used in manufacture. Both the factors of over-production and reduced costs of production enter into an explanation of the present changes of prices of the goods referred to in the question.

A. K.

### 'JACK LONDON AND SOCIALISM.'

J. W. Keable (Balham) asks if Jack London was a Socialist. He also asks us to explain a note in a previous issue which stated that his wife, Charmian London, misrepresented Jack London's views.

In reply, we would state that Jack London was for some time a member of the Socialist Labour Party in California, and later joined the Socialist Party of America. His letter of resignation from that reformist party shows his resentment of their opportunism.

We can only judge from Jack London's activities and writings. He advocated Socialism for many years, but was never clear as to the means of realising it. "The Iron Heel" is an instance of this.

His wife pictured him as being disgusted with the working class when he was merely expressing his contempt for the compromising S.P. of America. How little this bourgeois lady understood London's ideas can be seen from her so-called Life of him.

The real meaning of the class struggle was never grasped by Jack London. Hence, his support of the World War.

A. KOHN.

### HACKNEY.

INDOOR MEETINGS will be held in  
THE GREEN ROOM, BROTHERHOOD  
CHURCH, SOUTHGATE ROAD. N. 1

Thursday, February 11th. E. Hardy.

Subject - "Lessons of Bolshevism"

Thursday, February 25th. H. Waite.

Subject - "Principles of Socialism"

CHAIR TAKEN AT 7.45 P.M.

Admission free.

Questions and Discussion.

Commence 8 p.m.

All invited.

### A PROMISING MOVEMENT IN FRANCE.

After the war of 1914-18 and the seizure by the French capitalist class of the rich mineral-bearing districts of the Saar and Alsace-Lorraine, the industrialisation of France made rapid developments. Before the War, France was mainly an agricultural country, but it has now become one of the foremost industrial countries in the world.

Whilst this development was going on, unemployment was almost negligible, and many Poles and Italians were imported to work in the new industries which were springing up. That country, however, could no more escape the effects of the development of capitalism than any other, and in the beginning of this year its concomitant, unemployment, again became very serious.

During the past, various reformist parties, calling themselves Socialist, Radical-Socialist, Centre Party, etc., have competed for the workers' votes.

In May last, an organisation called the Spartacus Group was formed, and a perusal of their monthly journals shows that on many points their views are parallel to our own.

In the first issue of their journal, the leading article, after pointing out the absurdity of people going hungry when the world is gorged with wheat, states that the French workers are beginning to see that in the misery of the workers in Germany and Great Britain is a mirror of their own future. The Trade Union leaders have been leading a campaign for unemployment relief, either by the industries or by the Government, to be administered by the Trade Unions, and the paper points out that the result will simply be to make the unemployed workers into a permanent army receiving doles from the Trade Unions, whose leaders would thereby be still more secure in their jobs, and would end in a system of "thoroughly organised misery" for the working class.

But these claims, it adds, run counter to the wishes of the capitalist class, who see no point in maintaining a growing army of useless workers which has got beyond the stage when they form a reservoir of labour to help keep down wages to the lowest point, and their minds are now turning towards "surgical" solutions, such as another world war, in order to

destroy some of the surplus workers and factories.

The article concludes with an appeal to the workers not to be misled by capitalist propaganda, whether anti-Mussolini or pro-Soviet.

We must join issue with them on one important point, however. Whilst they affirm that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself, they do not seem to be quite clear as to the means by which this must be brought about. Several references are made to the necessity for "action," but it is not clear what this means, seeing that they condemn the vote.

It is Parliament which controls the army, navy and police, and until control of Parliament is obtained, those forces can always be used against the working class. To secure a majority in Parliament after winning the workers over to Socialism must, therefore, be the object of a working-class political party, and once this is accomplished, they will be in a position to control the armed forces and to start organising society on a Socialist basis.

No doubt the Spartacus group are disillusioned by the failure of so-called Socialist parties in the past, but this is because those parties have been Socialist in name only. It is for a working-class political party, democratically controlled and without "leaders," to educate the workers on Socialist principles and finally to capture a majority of seats in the Parliamentary machine. Until this is done, Parliament can always claim to represent the "nation" and will take any steps that the capitalists may deem necessary to crush any revolt by the workers.

We invite the Spartacus group to study our Declaration of Principles, which, they will find, contain the essential basis for Socialist organisation in France as in other developed capitalist countries.

R. M.

### BATTERSEA

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at

LATCHMERE BATHS (In 2nd Class  
Waiting Room). Entrance in Burns Rd.

on Thursday, February 17th at 8 p.m.

Speaker—E. WILMOT.

Subject—

'Tragic and Comic Aspects of the Communist Party'

Admission Free. All invited. Questions and Discussions.

### THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

#### CAN ANY LEADERS BE TRUSTED?

A correspondent writes saying that the results of the last election make him almost despair. He asks, "Can you trust the leaders of any party when in power?"

The question as to whether any leaders can be trusted not to put their personal interests foremost is one that can be answered by past experience. Working-class organisations, Trade Union as well as political, the reformist as well as the so-called revolutionary, have times out of number charged their leaders with betrayal. Some leaders have sacrificed the interests of their members for the sake of money, others for power, honours and influence, some merely under the seductive pressure of flattery. On the other hand, there have been leaders against whom no such charge has ever been levelled. We have, for example, never heard it suggested that Lenin betrayed the members of his party.

But, having said that much, have we even touched upon the real dangers of leadership? If an organisation is built up on the idea of leadership, that is, on the idea that the members need not themselves understand how to deal with their problems because their leaders will provide all the knowledge and thinking that may be required, then it is absolutely certain that that organisation cannot take action to achieve Socialism, and, further, that sooner or later it will meet its Waterloo. No leader, however wise and trustworthy, can lead a non-Socialist working class into Socialism. What the workers want at any moment and in relation to any current crisis is strictly limited by their knowledge. If the leader attempts to go beyond those limits, his members will desert or reject him. The fact that he has a better understanding than they have may actually compel him at a moment of crisis to do things, as he believes in their interest, that his members regard as betrayal. At the last General Election the position was not that the working class wanted Socialism and were betrayed by their leaders. The position was that the working class, not understanding Socialism, wanted free trade or protection, high prices or low prices, safety for the Savings Bank, a State bank or private banks, MacDonald or Henderson,



Lloyd George or Baldwin—in fact, anything and everything except Socialism. In such a background the question of betrayal by leaders looms large, but only because the Socialist material is lacking. When the workers understand Socialism and cease to be blind followers of leaders, there will no longer be great men with hundreds of thousands of supporters at their disposal, whose votes they can offer for sale to the capitalist class. There is no other road to Socialism except through the workers themselves having understanding of Socialist principles. That being the case, neither a MacDonald nor a Lenin can give the workers emancipation. ED. COMM.

\* \* \*

#### SHOULD VOTES BE WASTED?

A correspondent objects to the advice which the S.P.G.B. gives to the workers to write Socialism across their ballot paper. He says:—

After the struggles the common people have had to secure a vote, I can't quite agree to this.

The reasoning behind our correspondent's statement is rather curious. He says, in effect, the workers had to fight hard to get votes, therefore it would be absurd not to use them to vote for some candidate or other. But surely the kind of use to which they are put ought to have some consideration? The capitalists, or some of them, resisted giving votes to the workers because they thought, in their panicky ignorance, that the workers would use their votes to further working-class interests. A little experience showed that the workers, when first given votes, were content to use them to vote Tories and Liberals into Parliament. Had they foreseen this, none of the capitalists would have been afraid of extending the franchise.

Now, according to our correspondent, it matters less whom the workers vote for, than that they vote for somebody. But what if the only parties who at a given moment can afford to run candidates are parties standing for something contrary to working-class interests?

At the present time the Liberal, Labour and Tory Parties will use their seats in Parliament to maintain capitalism. The Socialist Party aims at abolishing capitalism, but cannot yet run candidates owing to the small number of Socialists and lack of funds. What else could we logically

do except tell the workers not to vote for the candidates of capitalist parties?

How could we, for example, tell the workers to vote Liberal or Labour, while at the same time telling them that Socialism is the only remedy for the social problem and that the Liberal and Labour Parties are opposed to Socialism? To play this dishonest game would only be to involve us in the ultimate discrediting of these capitalist parties.

Writing the word Socialism across the ballot paper prevents the vote being used to support our opponents, and also places on record the growth of the Socialist vote.

ED. COMM.

\* \* \*

#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Owing to pressure on space, several replies to correspondents are held over.

#### STEPNEY.

PUBLIC MEETINGS will be held at  
**ST. GEORGE'S LIBRARY, CABLE STREET, E.1**  
on Wednesday Evenings during February.

Admission free.  
Questions and Discussions.

All invited.  
Commence 8 p.m.

#### SHEFFIELD

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held at the  
**TRADES HALL (ROOM 7)**  
**CHARLES STREET**

on Wednesday, 24th February, at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker—J. Horner

Subject — "Do Socialists need Gods?"

Admission free. Non-members invited.  
Questions and Discussion.

#### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.

Readers in New Zealand are asked to communicate with the S.P.N.Z. at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland. The S.P.N.Z. are our agents and the *Socialist Standard* can be obtained at the above address.

#### CAPITALISM'S CRISES.

##### WELL-KNOWN COMMUNIST DISCOVERS MARX.

Writing in the January *Labour Monthly* of which he is Editor, the prominent Communist, Mr. R. Palme Dutt, recognises that the popular theory of the automatic collapse of capitalism is unsound, and that Marx was right in believing that capitalism will not end until the workers bring it to an end by their own conscious and organised action. Of course, Mr. Dutt does not admit in so many words—and possibly does not realise—that he has abandoned the official Communist Party standpoint.

In the December issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD it was pointed out that, as long ago as the eighties of last century, the late H. M. Hyndman fell into this error. At every industrial or financial crisis, to the day of his death after the War, he proclaimed the certain and immediate collapse of the system. The same idea was carried on by the I.L.P. and was swallowed whole by the Communists at the formation of their party in 1920.

Many of them picked up this fallacy from the writings of the American, Herman Cahn, who elaborated it in "The Collapse of Capitalism" and "Capital To-day." In the former (published by Kerr & Co., Chicago, 1919), Cahn said that the development of the credit system after Marx's death had brought a—

most profound change . . . in the economic world since his time . . . a new force has grown up, which no longer leaves the downfall of capitalism to the vague future, or its earlier ending to the spread of a high degree of intelligence among the real proletariat, but makes the coming of that great event a matter of figures and entirely independent of even the collective will of men. The war has enormously hastened the development of this force, and the catastrophe is imminent. (P. 9 and 10).

Writing while the War was still in progress, Cahn said that the downfall of capitalism,

root and branch, will be positively assured by a continuation of the war for, say, another year. That downfall will then be like an act of nature, and not dependent on the mental and moral preparation of the peoples of the world for a new form of society. (P. 38.).

He added, however, that whether the War went on or not, the downfall was assured (p. 118).

It was, of course, unfortunate that Cahn claimed his theories as Marxian and was believed by many who later flocked into the Communist parties. He failed to realise

that modern currency and credit difficulties are no more fundamental than similar difficulties of capitalism in its less developed condition. We have been able to see since the War that temporary forced departures from the gold standard do not prevent capitalism from continuing.

The Communists, not understanding the working of capitalism, based their theories and actions on this fallacy. Mr. Palme Dutt, in 1921, debating with Mr. George Hicks, used the illustration that capitalism was like a house that had collapsed already about our ears. There was no time, he said, to carry on Socialist propaganda, and no point in discussing whether the capitalists could patch up capitalism, because it had already come to a breaking-point.

One prominent Communist at that time declined to debate with the S.P.G.B. because, he said, the time for talk had gone; the revolution was here.

Trotsky and Varga, the Communist theoreticians, writing in the *Labour Monthly* (August, 1921), "proved" the "impossibility of the economic reconstruction of Europe" (p. 130).

The *Communist* (October 22nd, 1921) said that those who founded the C.P.G.B. were "impelled by the conviction that the capitalist system had broken down."

At intervals between 1921 and 1931, the Communists went on announcing, with just the same fervour as Hyndman had shown in the 'eighties, that capitalism had collapsed, or was just about to collapse.

In 1929, for example, the *Workers' Life* (May 31st, 1929) reported that "British capitalism is still on the decline."

Actually, the year 1929 was, from the capitalist standpoint, quite a good year.

In the October, 1931, *Labour Monthly* (i.e., just before the election), Mr. Palme Dutt was in a fever of excitement. He found that "the fight is here," "the crisis marches on relentlessly," "it is the whole basis of British Imperialism that is now beginning to crack," "the whole system is faced with collapse," "the hour of desperate crisis begins," and much more to the same effect.

This would, of course, have sounded better if it were not for the fact that the system which was now supposed to be facing "inevitable future downfall" had, according to Palme Dutt and the Communists, already collapsed ten years ago.



But in the January, 1932, issue, Mr. Dutt has had second thoughts. He says that—

The doom of world capitalism . . . was already pronounced by history in 1914 and renewed in 1917. . . . But in Western Europe the social roots of imperialism had struck deep within the proletariat, and had their reflection in Labour and social reformist policies. Therefore capitalism in Western Europe, despite its extreme chaos and breakdown, did not pass from the scene, but was painfully built up again after a fashion. (P. 10.)

He quotes Lenin as having said that "no situation for capitalism is without a way out," and says that Lenin meant that—

Until the proletarian revolution overthrows capitalism, it is inevitable that capitalism, whatever the extremity of its chaos and breakdown, will drag on, will of necessity find its own "way out," from form to form, from stage to stage, with increasing misery and renewed contradictions—until the proletariat acts. (P. 14.)

Again Mr. Dutt says that until we have the necessary—

action, organisation and victory of the working class . . . capitalism will still drag on from crisis to crisis. (P. 8.)

This is all very true and is a welcome, even although a tardy, recognition of the truth of the Marxian case that the S.P.G.B. has been preaching for 27 years against the opposition of the I.L.P. and later of the Communists. But we must remind Mr. Dutt that he has come a very long way from the official position of the Communist Party in 1920 and 1921.

Can it be that the foundations of the Communist Party are giving way and forcing the Communists to do some original thinking to bring their policy into line with the actual facts of the world to-day? H.

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## RUSSIA AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

### RUSSIA'S PRESENT POLICY.

Mr. Sokolnikoff went on to say that while the conviction of his Government was that the present crisis could not be cured by capitalist measures but only by socialistic planned economy, his Government were in no way attempting to use this opportunity to create disorder in the world's economy as had been stated by some fanatic anti-Soviet journalists. The Soviet Government was acting in accordance with their belief that two different economic systems could exist peacefully. (Brit. Russian Gazette, Nov., 1931.)

The above speech by the Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain is in complete contrast to the line taken by the Soviets before the Five-Year Plan started. Then the Third International and Moscow were "out" to smash world-wide capitalism, the British Empire, and to promote general strikes to impede the economy of capitalism. The necessity of building up Russian industry and agriculture under State and co-operative control has caused Russia to drop the Social Revolution proposals, and concentrate on amicable commercial and diplomatic relations with the world enemies of the working class. If Russia were in a position to be independent; if it had the material and mental development sufficient to ignore and oppose outside capitalist countries—the story of its diplomacy and commerce would be different. But, as Marx taught and history proves, a country cannot avoid the normal stages of social growth determined by social forces. Capitalism in some form or other was essential to prepare the ground for later developments.

### THE RUSSIAN-FRENCH ALLIANCE.

Each party promises not to undertake any propaganda to the extent of intervention in the private affairs of the other which has for its object the overthrow by force of the established constitution.

The above is one of the terms of the treaty signed by Russia and France and published in the Press on December 21st, 1931. This is another illustration of Russia's urgent need for friendly relations with other commercial nations. In this particular case the alliance on items of war and trade is with a capitalist country which Russia has especially denounced. The Communists in France who have complained so much of repression will now find added justification for continuing their patching-up and reform policies and ignoring the call of revolution. The theses of Moscow on armed rising will go into the museum.

Litvinoff, the Soviet Foreign Minister, has recently returned from Turkey, where he was received with great ceremony by Kemal Pasha and the Capitalist Government there. It is not so long since the Communist Magazine here was attacking the treatment of Communists in Turkey and bitterly opposing the Turkish Nationalist internal policy.

### WELCOME MUSSOLINI!

The very friendly relations with Mussolini and the cordial association with the Russian Ambassador there is another example of what they used to call "shaking hands with murder." "Remember Matteotti" used to be a Communist cry, but in the frantic endeavour to rush capitalist development in Russia they cannot afford to recall the slogans of World Revolution. The Trotskyists in America are asking that American Capitalists should loan Russia 100 millions. The plutocrats and "open-shop" capitalists of America are asked to help an alleged revolutionary country to get Socialism. Poland, Germany, Great Britain, etc., are carrying on ordinary capitalist relations with Russia, which is very anxious to promote peaceful business and diplomatic alliances with these bourgeois governments. In America many of the Capitalists, like Ford and the Harvester Company, who are so opposed even to trade union organisation are offered high terms for their assistance to develop Russian resources. Lord Melchett of Imperial Chemicals and class co-operation fame is quite satisfied to co-operate to the tune of millions in Russian contracts. Spanish Republicans not Communists are now invited to send delegations to Russia.

### SOME QUESTIONS FOR BOLSHEVIKS.

Why has Russia silently quietened the Third International? Why no more violent appeals and flaming theses calling for revolt and uprising? Why does the Soviet Embassy invite prominent Labour members to meet Bucharin at the reception given to him here on his visit recently? Why are Labour misleaders like Jack Mills, ex-M.P. for Deptford, welcomed at the Embassy? Why the co-operation with Mr. Coates, Labour Party spokesman and head of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee? Why should Stalin give up his time for friendly contact with prominent enemies of Revolution—such as Lady Astor, the Marquis of Lothian and Bernard Shaw? It would be very difficult for an ordinary

worker who is a Socialist to receive so much attention from Stalin and Russia generally.

### THE SOCIALIST ANSWER AND ATTITUDE.

The answer to these questions is simple. And the answer is a thorough confirmation of our attitude to the Bolsheviks, the Third International and the so-called Communist Party in Great Britain.

Russia does these things because Socialism is not possible there at present; because the much expected World Revolution cannot be got by slogans and will be the product alone of advanced economic conditions and an informed working class wanting Socialism, and because five-year plans involve capitalist assistance from the outside.

What we have always claimed is proved true—that capitalism, neglected so much by Czarist aristocrats, has to be developed by the successors of the Czars.

The nonsensical raving of Revolution without Revolutionists is shown up in its true colours. Russia cannot at present take part in the Revolution against World Capitalism. It is occupied with its own problem of developing Russia and hoping (as Michael Farbman put it recently) that at some date in the future it will have reached the stage of present-day capitalist industry in England and America.

In the meantime our work under far different conditions goes on. To advocate Socialism as the object of the working class struggle, where conditions like ours are ripe for Socialism and far too advanced to be dealt with by the reform policies of the Communist Parties in Europe and America and elsewhere. K.

### Sunday Evening Meetings.

Meetings are held at Head Office, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1 (near Boro' Underground Station), every Sunday at 8 p.m. Admission free. Questions and discussion. Non-members invited.

### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.



**BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA**.—Sec., 2 Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BECONTREE**.—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM**.—Sec., E. Jesper, 32, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL**.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON**.—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E. Lectures on alternate Thursdays. Public invited.

**GLASGOW**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY**.—Branch meets Arcadian Café, 42, Amherst Road, Hackney, 1st and 3rd Fridays in month, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21 Bridge Street, Homerton, E. 9.

**HULL**.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON**.—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning Road, Highgate, N.19.

**LEYTON**.—Communications to Sec., 8 Cheltenham Road, E.10. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER**.—Sec., D. White, 13, Sherdley Road, Higher Crumpsall, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE**.—Sec., Edmund Howarth, 14, Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead. Branch meets every Tuesday, 7.30 p.m., at the Labour Club, Picton Hall, New Bridge Street, Newcastle. Public discussion after branch business. Open-air meetings are held every Friday and Sunday in the Bigg Market at 8 p.m.

**PADDINGTON**.—Branch meeting last Wednesday in month 8 p.m., at 430 Harrow Road, W.9.

**SHEFFIELD**.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**.—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK**.—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY**.—Sec., W. Mays, 99, Oxford Road, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING**.—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays at "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Secretary, W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM**.—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Rd., N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW**.—Sec. S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall-rd., Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

**WATFORD**.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM**.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167, Romford-rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN**.—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 26, Russell Road, Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m. at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PARLIAMENT.

The State is the public power of coercion. It arose out of the early division of society into classes, and developed with the development of class conflicts. It is the result of the desire to keep "order"; that is, order in the interests of the class that is supreme; order to allow the ruling class to subdue and exploit the rest of the population without hindrance. Through the ages the State has been controlled, as a rule, by the class that has been economically the most important. It is maintained by taxes, and hence a class that has outgrown its economic importance can often continue for a time to control social affairs. As the State grew in size and complexity, it became more burdensome and the taxes grew with it. This led to quarrels among property owners over the amounts of their contributions. Much of the apparent cleavage between parties in modern States is at bottom only a question of who shall take the weight of taxation.

In the development of the State the modern Parliamentary system emerged as the most appropriate means for securing the domination of the present capitalist class, the last class to obtain social control. Parliaments were subjected to modification in the course of time and the modern product ensures to the capitalist the unquestioned right to the proceeds of the exploitation of the working class.

But the State controlled a huge aggregate of people of various social standings and nationalities, a relatively small number of whom moved in a circle so distinct from the majority that they might almost have belonged to another world. Production and distribution of wealth also developed on such a tremendous scale that social affairs became correspondingly burdensome and complicated. One could compare the past with

the present as the comparison between Stephenson's first locomotive and a modern railway engine. In order to run the State smoothly and secure the peaceable flow of profit, it became necessary to alter Parliamentary procedure so that the voice of the mass of people could be heard and their needs met; but only in so far as such alterations did not jeopardise the rule of the capitalists, in the opinion of their leading thinkers. Thus, in due course, the electoral machinery was modified until universal suffrage became the rule.

Parliament is the centre of power in this country. It makes the laws and it enforces them. Local bodies have certain law-making and enforcing powers, but these are subservient to the central body, which is supreme and which, where required, supplies the local body with any extra force necessary.

The instruments of power are the Army, Navy, Air and Police forces. The final word for setting these forces in motion rests with Cabinet Ministers. The Cabinet is the executive council which carries out the will of Parliament. Its members belong to the majority group, or are allowed to function by that group, or by arrangement, through a coalition of parties. In other words, the group that has an absolute majority in Parliament can put into operation whatever decrees it wishes by means of its control of the executive—the Cabinet. In theory the Prime Minister is appointed by the King (though the selection is confined within narrow limits) and has a free choice in the selection of his Ministers; but in fact no Cabinet could live without a Parliamentary majority to sanction its proposals.

Members of Parliament are elected by universal suffrage, and the vast majority of the voters are members of the working



class. The result is near enough democratic to ensure that when the mass of the working class understand the meaning of Socialism they have the means to bring it into being through Parliamentary action when they desire to do so.

Up to the present, the mass of the workers have lacked political knowledge and have voted for people instead of principles. They have given their votes to the people who made the most alluring promises, and as time proved the hollowness of the promises, the workers turned in disgust from one group of people to another, and then back again as the memory of previous disappointments faded.

This fact has led many to question the usefulness of Parliament. They have forgotten that whenever the workers have placed their trust in leaders they have almost always been let down. The workers have been as readily betrayed on the industrial field as they have on the political field. The trouble has not been due to the field of combat. It has been due to the method adopted. When the workers cease to regard certain individuals as endowed with some special capacity of "leadership," they will adopt the method of issuing instructions to delegates that are to be carried out regardless of the delegates' own views or wishes. The ground will then be cut from under the feet of those who prosper out of leadership, and such people will no longer have a saleable article for the capitalist in the shape of a blind following.

There has not yet been a Parliamentary test of the power of delegates acting on instructions given them by a large body of workers who knew exactly what they were after and how to get it. In fact, outside the Socialist Party of Great Britain the method has never been really applied. Time after time the specious words of some acknowledged leader have diverted groups of workers from their original aims, generally on the plea of "expediency." The word "expediency" has acted as a useful veil for generations to cover the compromising activities of leaders, but of late there are indications that "tactics" will replace it. The truth is that the foolish and cowardly belief in this fetish of leadership has been a considerable barrier to working class knowledge and progress. The power and wealth leaders acquire induce them to fortify their positions and insist on the necessity of leadership as a permanent institution

with the development of appropriate means for wire-pulling and mutual bargaining for position. The Labour Party has given striking proof of this in recent years.

Socialism will not be possible until the mass of the workers understand it and are prepared to vote for it. If a working class that did not understand Socialism were to vote for it, the result would only be chaos, as the first attempts to put it into operation would bewilder the majority of people and leave the way open for a counter-revolution. When the workers understand Socialism they will know what to expect and what will be involved in putting it into operation, and here they will defeat the efforts of any delegates ready to sell themselves to the opposition. In such circumstances a delegate could only sell once; he would not get a second chance. The price he would demand would be proportionately high. Even if the absurd view were accepted that all the delegates would be sellers, the price would be too great to be paid out of even the huge wealth of the capitalists.

Parliament has supreme power and the armed forces are only kept in existence by the yearly voting of supplies. As Marriott points out in "English Political Institutions":—

Under the English Constitution there would be no greater difficulty, in a formal and legal sense, in decreeing the abolition of the House of Lords or the House of Commons, than in procuring an Act for the construction of a tramway between Oxford and Reading. (p. 20.)

The Army Council controls the Army, but, as Sir John Creedy showed in his memorandum to the Civil Service Royal Commission, December, 1929, the Secretary for War, who is a member of it, is supreme and is solely responsible to King and Parliament. The Permanent Under-Secretary is solely responsible to the Secretary for all internal finance.

The Privy Council has no legislative authority; cancellations from it and appointments to it are at the discretion of the Prime Minister. Privy Council proclamations are not made at full meetings, but where the presence of two or more members is arranged by the Cabinet. In practice not more than four members are summoned, and rarely is anyone invited to attend a Council meeting who is not an active Cabinet member. It is executive in those matters only where the Cabinet does not require Parliamentary authority.

Marriott ("English Political Institutions"),

adds the following relating to the Admiralty:—

The Board of Admiralty now consists of six Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a Financial Parliamentary Secretary, and a Permanent Secretary. The responsible minister is the First Lord, invariably a civilian and a member of the Cabinet.

The Board meets at least once a week, and is in a very real sense responsible for the first line of National Defence, though in a technical and parliamentary sense the First Lord has undivided responsibility. (p. 116-117.)

A similar organisation obtains in the Air Force, the Air Minister being the responsible official.

The above shows how complete and secure is the grip Parliament has upon the armed forces, and the strikes and disturbances of past years have shown how readily these forces are put in motion, and also upon whose side they act. They are a forcible illustration of how necessary it is for the workers to obtain control of Parliament before attempting to uproot the existing foundations of society. They further show that the only way to obtain control is by the legal one of sending delegates to Parliament.

It has been suggested that when the workers' movement began to really challenge the position of the capitalist, the latter would suspend Parliament. The suspension of Parliament would, in the first instance, abolish the right of the workers to combine, and would thus put a legal end to all forms of working-class combination. But the cost to the capitalist of the permanent suspension of the Constitution would be the end of their rule and the beginning of chaos.

The size and complexity of a modern nation is so great that the time has long since gone by when members of the ruling class could occupy any considerable number of the administrative posts and manage any appreciable part of its activities. From top to bottom all departments are filled by paid or elected officials, and only a very few of these officials are drawn from the capitalist class itself. Practically all the work of controlling the activities of society to-day is performed by people who depend for their livelihood upon the pay they get for the work they do—members of the working class.

Thousands of functions have had to be delegated to subsidiary bodies, such as County Councils, Town Councils, Parish

Councils, and the like. Year by year this delegation of function grows greater and representation increases at the same rate.

Circumstances, therefore, have compelled the masters to place administration in the hands of elected bodies, and they can only withdraw it by bringing their house down about their ears.

The importance of Parliament is quite plainly recognised by the capitalists, and they give clear evidence of this at election times by the amount of wealth they spend and the inconvenience they suffer in order to ensure their control of it. GILMAC.

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

### DID MARX CONTRADICT HIMSELF?

A Canadian reader asks us to explain the relation between the Marxian "Price of Production" and the Labour Theory of Value. Another reader sends us for review "Karl Marx on Value," by J. W. Scott (pub., A. & C. Black, Ltd., 1920), in which the author claims to expose a contradiction in the Marxian view.

In "Value, Price, and Profit," Chap. VI, Marx states:—

As a general law we may therefore set it down that the values of commodities are directly as the times of labour employed in their production, and are inversely as the productive powers of the labour employed.

The Labour Theory of Value amounts to this: a commodity (that is, an article produced for sale) has a value, which expresses itself in exchange with other commodities. This value is determined by the labour-time necessary to produce the commodity. The price of the commodity is the money form of its exchange value. If an article is priced at £1, it is because the article and the metal in the sovereign are both representations of equal amounts of simple labour-time. In practice, an article is rarely sold at its value; it is generally higher or lower, owing partly to supply and demand, and partly to other factors. Taking the whole field of production, these variations cancel each other.

The value of an article is the basis of its price, and this is true of labour-power as of other commodities. Labour-power is sold to the employer, its value being the cost of the workers' food, clothing, etc. It remains to show how the capitalist makes his profit if he sells the workers' products on the average at their value, and buys the



workers' labour-power at its value. The profit arises from the fact that the workers are able to produce a value greater than the cost of maintaining themselves. The employing class retain this surplus-value.

The supposed contradiction lies in the following statement which the critics of Marx believe to be incompatible with the Labour Theory of Value.

In Vol. III of "Capital" we find Marx writing:—

The price of production of a commodity, then, is equal to its cost price plus a percentage of profit apportioned according to the average rate of profit, or in other words, equal to its cost price, plus the average profit. (Kerr Edition, p. 186.)

It is this seeming contradiction between Vol III and other writings that Scott uses in order to tilt at Marx. Scott states:—

It is not suggested here that labour has nothing to do with the creation of value. That would be an absurd statement. The suggestion is that Marx is wrong when he says that it is the entire and only cause. We insist that if value came from labour alone, it would vary with it. It does not do so. And there seems to be no reply to this except a surrender of Marx's principles. (p. 17.)

Elsewhere Scott states:—

It is a commonplace of political economy that under the competitive system things tend to fetch a price margin above their cost of production. Marx does not attempt to deny this. Yet his system is built on the assumption that things fetch a price proportioned to the labour-time that is in them. The difficulty about having both these statements correct is that they are not compatible with one another. (p. 23.)

What is the explanation of this alleged contradiction?

Marx divides the capital spent in the production of commodities into two parts:—

(1) That part spent upon raw material, machinery, and accessories, and which he termed "constant" capital, in the sense that its value remains constant.

(2) That part spent upon buying labour-power and which he termed "variable," in the sense that its value varies in the process, because the workers can produce values greater than the value of their labour-power.

Let us suppose that the capitalist buys raw material which, with the wear and tear of his machinery, is equal to 80,000 hours of labour-time. Now let us suppose that he buys labour-power which is expended in 40,000 hours in working the raw material up into the finished product. We then have products valued at 120,000 hours of labour-time. Yet the workers whose labour-power

was expended in 40,000 hours would receive as wages only the equivalent of, say, 20,000 hours, leaving the other 20,000 as a gift to the capitalist—profit, interest, etc. Such is the reality of capitalist production. Now let us look at its appearance.

The capitalist does not think in terms of labour-time, but in terms of money. Let us suppose that 10 hours of labour-time is equal in value to £1. He will then spend £8,000 on the raw material and wear and tear of his machinery (constant capital), and £2,000 on labour-power (variable capital). The capital advanced is £10,000, and is known as Cost of Production. If the average rate of profit over the whole field of production, as determined by the forces of competition, is, let us say, 20 per cent., he adds £2,000 to his Cost of Production, making the total Price of Production £12,000, and the finished product a fraction of this. This Production Price is the point about which the Market Price fluctuates according to the conditions that prevail in the market.

It must, then, not be assumed that products are always sold exactly at their value. As Marx says:—

The assumption that the commodities of the various spheres of production are sold at their value implies, of course, only that their value is the centre of gravity around which prices fluctuate, and around which their rise and fall tends to an equilibrium. ("Capital," Vol. III, p. 210.)

There are some commodities which are always sold above their value; there are others, e.g., some agricultural products, which are always sold below. To understand this we must consider what Marx termed the "organic" composition of capital, i.e., relationship between "constant" and "variable" quantities. That in which the "constant" is large proportionate to the "variable," Marx termed capital of "high organic composition"; that in which the "constant" is small compared with the "variable," Marx termed capital of "low organic composition." The tendency of capitalist development is to spend a greater part of the outlay on "constant" capital and less on the "variable." The following table will show capitals in three different stages of organic composition, A being the lowest, C the highest:

	Value of				
	C.	V.	S.	Product.	P.
A	70	30	30	130	30%
B	80	20	20	120	20%
C	90	10	10	110	10%

We are assuming, for the sake of simplicity, that the rate of exploitation is 100 per cent., that is, the labour-power creates a surplus equal to its own value, and the capital in each case (constant plus variable) is 100, C being constant and V variable, S being the surplus and P the rate of profit. The value of the finished product in "A" sphere would be 130; in "B," 120; in "C," 110: making profits of 30 per cent., 20 per cent., and 10 per cent. The average of these profits is 20 per cent. The Cost of Production (constant plus variable) is the same in each sphere, that is, 100. The Price of Production of each product, then, is Cost of Production, 100, plus Average Rate of Profit, 20. Total, 120. The products of sphere A, then, are sold at 10 below their value, which is counterbalanced by those in sphere C being sold at 10 above their value. From this we can deduce the following: Those spheres of production in which the "organic" composition of capital is high tend to sell their products above their value, and those spheres in which the "organic" composition is low tend to sell their products below their value.

Products are sold, not merely as products of labour-power, but as products of capital, and, as Marx states:—

A capitalist selling his commodities at their price of production recovers money in proportion to the value of the capital consumed in their production and secures profits in proportion to the aliquot part which his capital represents in the total social capital. His cost prices are specific. But the profit added to his cost prices is independent of his particular sphere of production, for it is a simple average per 100 of invested capital. (Vol. III, p. 187.)

While one commodity receives less than the average of surplus-value, another receives more than the average, and these deviations mutually compensate one another.

In short, under capitalist production, the general law of value enforces itself merely as the prevailing tendency, in a very complicated and approximate manner, as a never ascertainable average of ceaseless fluctuations. (Vol. III, p. 190.)

Now one further point for Professor Scott and other critics who believe that the third volume of "Capital" presents a theory not compatible with the first volume and not perceived by Marx when he published the first volume.

On page 293 of Vol. I (Sonnenschein Edition) we read Marx's own statement of the apparent contradiction, his promise to

deal with it later, and his reasons for delaying that treatment:—

... the masses of value and of surplus value produced by different capitals—the value of labour-power being given and its degree of exploitation being equal—vary directly as the amounts of the variable constituents of these capitals, i.e., as their constituents transformed into living labour-power.

This law clearly contradicts all experience based on appearance. Everyone knows that a cotton spinner who, reckoning the percentage on the whole of his applied capital, employs much constant and little variable capital, does not, on account of this, pocket less profit or surplus value than a baker, who relatively sets in motion much variable and little constant capital. For the solution of this apparent contradiction, many intermediate terms are as yet wanted. . . . It will be seen later how the school of Ricardo has come to grief over this stumbling-block. Vulgar economy which, indeed, "has really learnt nothing," here as everywhere sticks to appearances in opposition to the law which regulates and explains them. In opposition to Spinoza, it believes that "ignorance is a sufficient reason."

H. C.

## ARE WE PRACTICAL?

Certain critics have asked why we do not organise a mass resistance of the workers against the wage-cuts of the National Government. Socialist propaganda is all very well, they say, but what are we doing in the meantime whilst the workers' standard of living is being mercilessly attacked?

The question is a curious one. Which workers are we to organise? The workers who voted the National Government into power, or the workers who supported the equally non-Socialist Labour Party? And how are we to organise politically un-instructed workers who can easily be stampeded into a panic by the capitalist press?

In the first place, we are a political party with a definite political object. As workers and members of trade unions we must be opposed to all wage-cuts, but as Socialists and members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain we go further. We are opposed to the biggest cut of all—the profit cut—which robs the workers all the time of the bulk of the wealth they produce. This meantime question sounds quite sensible till you look at it closely. It depends entirely upon the workers whether there shall be a meantime and how long that meantime will be. In the meantime the capitalist class hold political power and they are therefore masters



of the situation. Moreover, if it is possible to reform the present system of society in the interests of the working class, there is no need for Socialism. But experience has proven that to be impossible. In spite of all the reforms of the three biggest parties, the conditions of the workers steadily worsen.

Thirty years ago we were told the same story by the Labour Party, the I.L.P., S.D.P., and other bodies. Our method of achieving Socialism by educating the workers in Socialist principles would, they said, take centuries. They had a better and quicker way. They would give the workers reforms and higher wages, and win their support in that way. Socialism would be with us in no time. Perhaps! The Labour Party can now number its adherents by the million, but is it truly a menace to the existing order of society? Are the workers beginning to take an intelligent interest in Socialism as a result of all these years of the Labour Party's political activity? No. They are still struggling blindly and vainly. They are still being led like sheep down the blind alley of social reform and "direct action," by the "intelligent minorities" who pose as their saviours. One can understand from the following the reasons for the Labour Party collapse.

In a letter to the *New Leader* (October 12th, 1928), Dr. Alfred Salter, Labour M.P. and member of the I.L.P., frankly admitted that there is not a single constituency in the country where there are a majority of convinced Socialist electors. He said:—

We have plenty of districts, such as Bermondsey, where there is an overwhelming Labour majority, but it is a sheer delusion to think that the greater number of these people understand what we mean by Socialism. They neither understand it nor want it. (Our Italics.)

Labour majorities are not so "overwhelming" now, and the electors in these constituencies who return Labour candidates to Parliament are not, and cannot be, Socialists, for the self-evident reason that the Labour Party has never advocated Socialism. MacDonald, Henderson and Co. have in practice served the interest of the Master Class by confusing the minds of the workers. They have made them believe that Socialism is State charity, more doles, more pensions, better prisons, health insurance and family allowances, Lansbury Lidos, and, of course, we must not forget to mention Mr. Lansbury's proposed tarpaulin

doss-houses in the parks. These things are not Socialism. Socialism is a system of society in which the means of life are owned in common. Socialism implies the social ownership of all the things necessary to maintain life, the land, railways, factories, etc., to be democratically controlled and used in the interest of the whole of society. Now, you workers who voted for the Labour Party and imagined you were voting for Socialism, what have you to say? You are disillusioned and bewildered, but remember that all the time you were voting for the retention of capitalism—and your poverty. The Labour Government failed, but the Object and Declaration of Principles on the back page of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD still hold good. The Labour Government failed because it tried to solve working-class problems within the existing framework of society. They quickly discovered that it was not possible to administer capitalism in the interests of the working class. They boasted before taking office that they had in hand schemes of development which would provide work for tens of thousands of workers. These schemes were put into operation, but at the same time capitalism was displacing hundreds of thousands of workers, due to the worsening trade depression and wage-saving machinery. During the life of the last Labour Government unemployment mounted to a record figure.

Yet the solution to the "problem" of unemployment is really quite simple. After all, what is unemployment? It is the inability of the worker to sell the only thing he possesses—his working energies, his labour-power. Unemployment is, therefore, the outcome of wage-slavery. Wage-slavery can only exist in a society where there are two classes, employers and employed; an owning class that produces nothing, and a propertyless class that produces the wealth. Once the necessity to seek an employer is abolished, this so-called problem vanishes into thin air. In order to achieve this, we must first abolish the private property basis of society, and there will no longer be any classes; no capitalist class and no working class, no employers and no employed, no profits and no wages; hence, no unemployment, because there will be no employment.

This private ownership of the means of life is the cause not merely of unemployment, but of the general poverty condition of the workers, whether in work or out of

work, and the fruits of poverty, disease, prostitution and crime.

Neither the Labour Party nor any other reform party can protect you against the evils of the capitalist system, because they do not understand and are not prepared to remove the fundamental cause of these evils—capitalism. They will promise you the sun, the moon and the stars, but they do not give you the only remedy for your poverty—Socialism. Their reforms are useless to solve the main poverty problem, because you cannot have capitalism without its effects. You cannot have a commercial system without the laws of commerce. You cannot have capitalism without the inevitable concentration of wealth into a few hands and the formation of huge international trusts and combines. You cannot have capitalism without a propertyless class of wealth-producers and the accumulation of misery and degradation for them. No reform can prevent the present system from developing according to the laws governing its existence.

At this point, fellow-workers, you will perhaps ask if we consider all reforms to be bad in their effects. Is there no room for improvement in working-class conditions within the present system? The answer is that the capitalists have power, and it is they who decide to give or to withhold reforms, not in your interests, but in their own. We are opposed to the policy of devoting energies to the struggle for reforms, instead of devoting them to the struggle for Socialism. In any event the growth of a strong Socialist movement would do more to make the capitalists yield concessions than all the efforts of the reformers.

When the workers become Socialists and have won political power from the hands of their masters, they will not use it merely to modify a few of the effects of their slavery, but to end it. Questions such as Free Trade or Protection are of no concern to the workers. They are faced with exactly the same problems all over the capitalist world. Their misery and poverty are international. Protection does not safeguard their jobs or their wages. Whether it is in tariff countries like Germany and the United States, or Free Trade countries such as England has been, the same features of capitalism exist. Increased power to make goods alongside increased unemployment. Side by side with the developing power to

produce wealth there is more intense poverty. The application of science to industry is not used to make the lives of the workers more comfortable, but to increase the profits of the capitalist owners. Every new machine is a weapon against the workers. So long as the worker's labour-power is an article of merchandise like cheese or tin—that is, so long as he remains a wage-earner—no reform can give him security and comfort. So long as the means of life are in private hands and the motive for production is profit, the more wealth the workers are able to produce, the less will be their portion, and the harder they work, the sooner they will be out of work.

If all the time, money and trouble spent on the advocacy of reforms had been devoted to Socialist propaganda, the workers would now occupy a much stronger position. Capitalism cannot be reformed without at the same time being strengthened. The reform parties are but deluding the workers with the foolish and futile hope that their problems can be solved inside the present system of society. They serve the interest of the capitalist class by hiding from the workers the cause of their poverty. Every reform in the programmes of these parties that is likely to be put into operation would not materially alter the condition of the workers or endanger the capitalists. Not one of them touches the fundamental cause of working-class poverty. They can be safely supported by non-Socialists and anti-Socialists. The support won by these parties is not support for Socialism, and must be essentially limited by the limited nature of their programmes.

Study Socialism, organise in the Socialist Party to abolish the system that enslaves you, and establish a new system of society in which the men and women who produce and distribute wealth shall have free and equal access to the means of life. KAYE.

### The 28th ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

WILL BE HELD ON

Friday and Saturday, March 25th and 26th,

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m.

Open to All.

### THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION

will take place in the above Hall on

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 25th, at 7.30 p.m.

DOORS OPEN 7 p.m.

Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or Head Office.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard

MARCH,



1932

## BUNGLERS AT WORK

## THE COLLAPSE OF THE COMMUNISTS.

In our February issue attention was called to the change of view on the part of a leading Communist (Mr. R. P. Dutt) regarding the long-heralded collapse of capitalism.

Mr. Dutt is by no means alone in having beat a retreat from the position occupied by the Communists practically since the formation of their Party. According to the *Daily Worker* of January 20th, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain arrived at certain "important decisions" concerning its "revolutionary mass work." "The Election results had shown that the isolation of the party, its main weakness, was not yet overcome." Hence a "new line" had to be hunted for once more.

In the course of the discussion Mr. Rust remarked that—

the loose talk about "No way out for capitalists from the crisis" led to fatalism, and passive waiting for the "collapse" to the "Let them Starve!" theory, and actually helped the Labour Party.

Speaking at the Tivoli Theatre, Sheffield, on January 24th (when he should have been debating with a representative of the S.P.G.B. at Stockport), Mr. J. T. Murphy spent over three-quarters of an hour riddling this and kindred delusions of the Communist rank and file. "There is no reason," he declared, "why capitalism cannot stagger on from one generation to another, from one crisis to another, unless the workers

end it." Unfortunately, he did not enlighten his hearers as to how they were to do this.

Vague talk about "fighting back" and dark hints about "inevitable civil war" (they promised civil war in the winter of 1921) were the only things offered in the way of "a constructive policy."

The man who says the workers will only fight when kicked in the belly only shows that he is not prepared to carry on the work of education.

proceeded Mr. Murphy.

What terrible "theoretical stuff" is this with which to feed red-blooded "men of action"? And then the speaker let the cat out of the bag; he commented on the frequency with which the I.L.P. leaders have of late been working up the idea of an impending collapse. The I.L.P. have stolen the Communist thunder. They have been out-ranting the professional ranters. In their indecent haste to distinguish themselves from their offspring, the Labour Party (from which, however, they dare not disaffiliate), the I.L.P. have thought it good policy to try to annex the Communist Party's following. Hence attempts to run a rival unemployed organisation.

In turn, therefore, the leaders of the Communists find it necessary to abandon the slogans once so lustily chanted, in order to preserve their distinction from the "phrase-mongers" of the I.L.P. The propaganda of the "united front" has given way to "exposure of left manoeuvres," because "to many workers the difference in principle between the policy of the C.P. and the policy of the reformists was not at all made clear" (*Daily Worker*, January 20th).

The issue, however, is by no means a purely national one. Wiring from Moscow on November 3rd, 1931, Mr. Walter Duranty reported an interview given by a Soviet official to the *New York Times* (November 4th), in the course of which the official made the remark that—

capitalism was not yet at death's door and the growing rate of under-production during the past year must ultimately stimulate demand and raise prices."

Mr. Duranty proceeded to comment as follows:—

Like all Soviet utterances, this tallied with the "Party Line" as expressed by Joseph Stalin and other leaders who believe the present depression is not the end of capitalism. Black as things look everywhere Soviet opinion holds this is no more than one crisis in the long series which capitalist economists regard as indicative of capitalism's "growing pains."

How unfortunate that in their General Election manifesto, 1931, the British Communists should have committed themselves to the definite statement that "capitalism has gone bankrupt" (p. 4).

A further example of the humble and contrite heart that has become increasingly noticeable at Communist Party Headquarters is provided in the *Daily Worker* of January 25th. Most Socialists and a large number of non-Socialists are familiar with the Communist Party's boasts of their leadership of the local strikes all over the country in the day-to-day struggle with capital. The *Daily Worker* now says:—

The textile workers, the hosiery workers and the London lightermen are all on the streets. In no case are we in the leading role.

Further on they account for this by saying:—

We are slow to learn from our mistakes and there is such a rich experience to learn from.

(Italics ours.)

What have been some of our chief mistakes in the strike struggles? First a very formal and frivolous attitude to questions of strike policy and organisation.

We have brought forward demands that have been worked out in the Party rooms by a few Communists, and many times by Communists who have not the faintest contact or knowledge of the industry in which the strikes are taking place.

We set up rank-and-file committees, which are committees composed of ourselves, destitute of representative authority, and which only succeed in degrading the conception of what a rank and file strike committee ought to be.

Many times we lightmindedly call for strike action without the semblance of preparation having been made, so that in some districts, when workers see our comrades, they are apt to say, "Hello, what are we to strike for to-day?" Why do we mention these weaknesses so openly? Because, unless we can kill such methods we shall never correct our work. ("Daily Worker," 25th January.)

Alas! even the Christians have for centuries confessed themselves as miserable sinners regularly every Sunday—without apparent effect. They still go on sinning.

The above "mistakes" of the Communists have been repeatedly pointed out for years in these columns, but, as they admit, they are slow to learn.

When the workers generally acquire an understanding of their position under capitalism, they will not require to be told what to do, either upon the political or the industrial field. They will then be in a position to dispense with leaders of the Henderson, Thomas and Clynes type, with

their poisonous doctrines of conciliation; but just as little will they need the crew of conceited busybodies who have failed so conspicuously to dislodge these leaders from their position.

## WAR AND THE WORKERS.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE EASTERN CRISIS.

The world has not changed much since 1914. The League of Nations, after innumerable conferences, and in spite of the Pacts and Covenants and solemn pledges of statesmen and the enthusiastic support of millions of well-meaning men and women of all nations, has not stopped war, any more than it stopped the preparations for war. The conflict between China and Japan shows up the same forces struggling for lordship as did the Great War, the same rivalries between the sections of the capitalist class, and the same readiness to destroy the lives and health of the toilers in the interests of their masters.

The war in the East is 1914 over again, with the same diplomatic deceptions and militaristic propaganda, the same subordination of lives to profit, and the same swallowing of lies by a working class nourished on the illusions of ignorant and credulous "Labour" leaders.

It is interesting to glance at the newspaper accounts of the origin and course of the dispute. In the middle of January a Chinese "mob" attacked some Japanese monks in Shanghai. A Japanese "mob" retaliated by setting fire to a Chinese towel factory and by attacking Chinese policemen. (With recollections of the use authorities have often made of seemingly spontaneous disorders, we may well wonder to what extent the acts of these mobs were condoned, if not instigated, by the Governments.) The Japanese Government then presented a demand for apologies and amends, and at the same time sent warships, marines and aircraft to Shanghai—protesting meanwhile against the suggestion that they had any but peaceful intentions. The Chinese Mayor of Greater Shanghai agreed to the demands of Japan, but the latter proceeded with the landing of forces "to protect Japanese nationals." The Chinese resisted, and fighting began. So far there was no formal declaration of war, the mutual butchery being still on a "friendly" basis. Japanese aeroplanes



dropped bombs on railways and caused loss of life and property to Chinese civilians. China appealed to the League of Nations, and the British and American Governments protested against the violation by Japan of the neutrality of the International Settlement at Shanghai. Japanese warships then shelled Nanking "without warning," and after two weeks of feverish preparation a big Japanese offensive opened on Saturday, February 20th.

So the game goes merrily on—with the workers as pawns; workers in the armies and navies, workers in the bombing planes, and in the factories and slums on which the bombs are rained, all engaged in protecting the interests of the capitalist class. Workers so blind to their own interests that they offer themselves up willing victims.

All the secondary evils of war are to hand on this occasion. The stories of "atrocities"—as if war could be anything but an atrocity—the "dum-dum bullets" accusation, to which the Japanese delegates at the League of Nations replied, somewhat illogically, "Japan never made use of dum-dum bullets during the Russo-Japanese War. How could we use them now?" (*Daily Express*, February 20th). The "backward country" excuse is pleaded by Japan as justification for enforcing "order" in China, backed up with the telling jibe that the protesting powers had themselves played the same role in China in the past (*Daily Express*, February 20th). Diplomatic evasions are used by Japan in a crude way that rather shocks the more polished liars who serve the Western Governments. Japan, sending 10,000 reinforcements to Shanghai, assured the U.S.A. Government point blank that no such force was being sent (*Daily Herald*, February 5th). When the troops which were "not being sent" actually arrived, the U.S.A. Ambassador at Tokyo informed the Japanese Foreign Minister that he was unable any longer to believe statements made by Japan. To this the Japs replied that they had to lie in order to prevent the Chinese from finding out, although it was the Chinese who first reported the despatch of the troops!

In 1932, as of old, the capitalists of the world rush to supply the weapons of destruction to both sides—at a profit—and the shares of armament firms are rising. The *Daily Herald* (February 10th) showed that war material had been pouring into Japan and China from manufacturers in Great

Britain, Norway, Germany, the U.S.A., and elsewhere. British firms were supplying both sides, and when the Board of Trade were asked if it was proposed to place an embargo on this traffic, they replied that to do so would be an "unfriendly act" (*Daily Herald*, February 10th).

The Governments of the world and the newspapers have taken sides in the dispute according to their interests and prejudices. Several Governments have sought to restrain the Japanese forces, for the reason disclosed by *The Times* in a somewhat threatening article:—

Other countries than Japan have immense vested interests in the great Chinese trading centre (Shanghai), and they will not remain inactive while a privileged position is created by violence. ("Times," 3rd February.)

The truth is, of course, that Japan and the other Powers are interested in China because their capitalists have money invested in manufacturing and trading concerns on Chinese soil. Japan has little coal and iron within her own boundaries, and is attempting to make up the deficiency by developing the coal and iron deposits of Manchuria and the region near Hankow. It has been estimated that Japanese capitalists have £200,000,000 invested in Manchuria, hence the determination to control this and neighbouring Chinese provinces. For the same reason the British, American, French and other capitalists, with hundreds of millions of pounds invested in Shanghai, the Yangtze valley and elsewhere, are anxious to prevent Japan from furthering her interests in China at their expense.

But let there be no mistake about the real nature of the privilege for which the Powers are struggling. It is not simply for the right to work coal and iron deposits, or to develop trade, that they are prepared to go to war. Neither the Japanese nor any other capitalist has an urge to go hewing coal in a Manchurian mine. What moves the capitalists is the lust to exploit the workers. What they want is "surplus value," the difference between the value of the goods produced by the workers and their cost of maintenance, in the form of wages. To protect their hold on the means of production and distribution, and to gain new markets and areas for raw material, the ruling class will stick at nothing. In the light of this over-ruling purpose, war to them appears as a regrettable necessity.

With this in mind, we can see how logical it would be for the workers of all countries

to unite against their exploiters and refuse to support their interests either in peace or in war. By the same standard we can see how utterly the "Labour" leaders fail to give expression to working-class interests.

Instead of urging the workers of all countries, including both Japan and China, to unite against capitalism and capitalist war-makers, we see the British Labour Party protesting against Japanese aggression! As if the lust of the Japanese capitalist to rob the workers of China and Japan is in any way different from the lust of the British, the Chinese, or the American capitalist! Thus the *Daily Herald*, in an editorial (February 18th), charges Japan with having committed "outrages," and demands that "Japan must stop." Mr. Lansbury, leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, in an interview given to the *Daily Herald* (February 2nd), asks the European Powers and the U.S.A. (which means, in fact, the capitalist Governments of those countries) to—

make it plain that they will boycott Japan unless it acts reasonably.

He urges:—

not a farthing for the Japanese, not a gun, not a stroke of business with them until they are prepared to sit down round a table and discuss their grievances peaceably.

Mr. Lansbury says not a word about the real object of capitalist enterprise—the exploitation of the workers. All he asks is that they discuss their "grievances" reasonably. Not a word about the Chinese Government's brutal suppression of trade unions and other workers' organisations, and the horrible conditions in Chinese factories and mines—brutality and misery paralleled in Japan, U.S.A., the British Empire, and in all capitalist countries. Mr. Lansbury and the Labour Party are content to demand that the other capitalist Powers shall exert pressure to restrain Japanese capitalist interests, and to secure the discussion at a round table of the way in which the fruits of the exploitation of the Chinese workers are to be divided up between Chinese, Japanese, and other capitalists.

Thus the Labour Party repeats its crime of 1914. Instead of profiting from the experiences of that war, they have forgotten everything and learned nothing. It is "poor little Belgium" over again, with China in the leading role.

From information published in the Press

Bulletin of the "Labour and Socialist International" (January 23rd), the largest Chinese trade union, the "General Union of Mechanics," with a membership of over 100,000, shares the illusions of its European Labour associates. This organisation issued a letter of protest against the aggression of Japan in taking possession of—

our territories in Manchuria and Mongolia. . . . thus threatening, as did Germany, under the Kaiser, the freedom of the world.

Of course, "our territories in Manchuria and Mongolia" belong to the Chinese workers no more than did the territory of Germany and England in 1914 belong to the English and German workers, or than it does to-day in the "free world" for which millions threw away their lives. It is of minor importance to the workers whether their exploitation goes on under one flag or another. Any resistance to aggression should be directed, not against the foreign enemies of their capitalist exploiters, but at home against the capitalists of each country; that is, against those who keep the workers out of possession of the means of life. Fighting the foreigner is playing the capitalist game.

There are, no doubt, other workers in China who realise this truth, in spite of the bad advice given to them by their Labour leaders. From Japan comes news that the "National Industrial and Agricultural Working Masses Party," right at the commencement of the dispute, took a "definite anti-war attitude." Attempts were made to carry on active opposition to the war, but were suppressed by the police, who further suppressed a conference called to protest against the actions of the Japanese Government.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, which from 1914 to 1918 maintained its attitude of Socialist opposition to the War, urges the workers in all countries to recognise the interest they have in common against the capitalists. "National defence," "national independence," "protection of national interests" are phrases used by capitalists to set the workers against each other in the interests solely of the national groups of capitalists. There is not at stake here any issue justifying the shedding of working-class blood. H.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Many replies to correspondents have had to be held over owing to pressure on space.



## A DEBATE WITH THE I.L.P.

H. CROOKS, representing the Independent Labour Party

EDMUND HOWARTH, representing the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

"Which Party Should the Workers Support: the I.L.P. or S.P.G.B.?" This proposition was debated at Newcastle-on-Tyne on Thursday, January 14th, 1932, 7.30 p.m., at 3, Higham Place.

Mr. H. Yarwood, Secretary of the Newcastle Trades Council, presided. The Chairman intimated that the conditions of debate were: each speaker 30 minutes, followed by a general discussion for half-an-hour, then a closing speech of 15 minutes for both speakers.

H. CROOKS, on behalf of the I.L.P., opened by stating that, unfortunately, at present the workers supported neither the I.L.P. nor S.P.G.B., but hoped that eventually the workers would support Socialism. He would confine the debate to the main issues. The I.L.P. was a workers' party which believed that Socialism is not likely to be brought about by anything but a mass movement. No sudden transformation would be possible unless the workers realised their class position and subjection to the master class. To achieve Socialism, the workers must capture political power, national and local, and this must be the work of the workers themselves. He stated that the I.L.P. was the "midwife" of the Labour Party, and that he did not believe the Labour Party was ever Socialist, but only a workers' party. He believed, however, that the Labour Party would take the right steps forward to reach a state of Socialism. As a member of the I.L.P. for 27 years, he believed that Socialism would now come very rapidly owing to recent development. His views as to the imminence of Socialism had often changed during the past few years; his view of the approach of Socialism had never been static, but constantly changing. He accepted Marx's principle of wage-labour and capital, and was convinced that the capitalist system would break down through the weight of contradictions in its own system. Every Socialist was not bound to have read Marx, but must adopt the principles of Marx. Most of the I.L.P. members have the essential sincerity to achieve Socialism, although there had been unfortunate episodes in I.L.P. history through the Party not having

been wisely led. Leaders such as MacDonald and Snowden had admittedly let them down. So long as the fight for Labour representation was necessary, Labour members had, unfortunately, shelved Socialism. The Labour Party had shown weakness when it first took office, but the I.L.P., although affiliated, opposed the Labour Party when it dropped Socialism. The aim of the I.L.P. was to convert the Labour Party to Socialism from inside; in fact, because of these activities, the I.L.P. was expecting to be thrown out of the Labour Party. The economic situation shows that the revolutionary period foretold by Marx is on us now. Capitalism is in its death throes. The workers' part in this must be to organise politically. Capitalism may attempt to re-organise in order to stabilise itself, but he thought that the question of International Debts would stand in the way. Capitalists will not forego their debts; it is not capitalist mentality to do so. The workers' standard of living will fall with the unemployed's falling standard, but there was no fear that the I.L.P. would not try to maintain that standard as high as possible. The S.P.G.B. does not believe in Parliamentary representation or putting candidates before the electorate until they are certain of a majority. This attitude was negative and not forcible enough to achieve Socialism. He could prove his assertion by figures. The I.L.P. has 30,000 members; the Communist Party 2,500; and the S.P.G.B. about a quarter of that number. He would like to ask Howarth how long it will take the S.P.G.B. to get the support of the workers at this rate of progress? The workers should support the I.L.P. on its past record.

### FIRST SPEECH FOR THE S.P.G.B.

EDMUND HOWARTH, on behalf of the S.P.G.B., said that his opponent had merely stated his own views, and not necessarily those of the I.L.P. His opponent had contrived to give the impression that the I.L.P. accepted the teachings of Marx. That was entirely false. He (Howarth) would read out the stated object of the I.L.P., which was—

... the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth. The Socialist Commonwealth is that State of Society in which Land and Capital are communally owned, and the processes of production, distribution and exchange are social functions.

The expression "communal ownership of capital" was self-contradictory. Capital is that part of wealth used to make a profit. Socialism meant the elimination of profit-making and profit-taking. The division of society into classes disappears under Socialism. The reference to "exchange" was also an absurdity. The new form of Society would be concerned only with the production and distribution of material requirements. "Communal ownership of capital" was not Socialism, but a meaningless phrase. The I.L.P. definitely rejected the teachings of Marx, and their notion of common ownership included such utilities as Nationalisation, State Control, Municipalisation and Public Utility Corporations of the type sponsored by Mr. Morrison, the ex-Labour Minister of Transport. The sole object of the Socialist Party was the establishment of Socialism, that is, a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community. The Socialist Party alone had a clear grasp of the principles of Socialism, and were able to correctly define it. The uselessness of Nationalisation to change the economic conditions of the workers was well exemplified in a paragraph appearing in "The Socialist Programme," published by the I.L.P. in 1923. On page 24 it is stated that:—

The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State Mines or Railway Stock, based on a valuation, and bearing a fixed rate of interest.

Under this magnificent scheme the capitalists continued to exist upon interest extracted from the wage-earners. The Post Office was often held up by I.L.P.'ers as an example of the benefits of State control, which they fondly imagine is a form of Socialism. The *Daily Herald* made the following significant admission respecting this nationalised institution:—

(14th December, 1925).—So far from being a charge on the community, the Post Office has, in thirteen years, 1912-13 to 1924-25, made a profit of 44 millions, all of which has gone in the relief of taxation. Since 1914 there has been a decrease of more than 24,000 in staff, while much work has been added to the Post Office. This has resulted in speeding-up and overwork.

Nationalisation changed the form, but not the substance of capitalist ownership, and was a measure that could be, and was, supported by various capitalist groups. We were told by the late Mr. John Wheatley, Labour ex-Minister of Health and a prominent member of the I.L.P., in a speech reported in the *Daily Herald* on November 20th, 1925, that:—

It could be affected without making the capitalists poorer, or lowering their standard of life.

His opponent had endeavoured to prove that the I.L.P. was something fundamentally different to the Labour Party. The I.L.P. was an affiliated body, and differed only in the number and kind of reforms advocated. The Living Wage proposals, Family Allowances, etc., would leave Capitalism intact and leave the social problem unsolved. That could only be solved by ending capitalism. The futility of the I.L.P. programme was asserted by Philip Snowden, who had been chairman of the I.L.P. for six years and had spent a good deal of his life in advocating the reform theories of the I.L.P. He wrote in *Reynolds's*, April 24th, 1927:—

The I.L.P. programme does not enthuse me. It is neither Socialism nor even a colourable imitation of it.

The I.L.P. was a party of social reform pure and simple, engaged in the business of enlisting support for various fantastic schemes to catch votes from non-Socialists. The purpose of their "Socialism in Our Time" proposals was candidly admitted by the Acting Editor of *Forward* in the issue of July 7th, 1928. He wrote:—

The I.L.P. is certainly not committed to advocating "the overthrow of the Capitalist system." Its "Socialism in our Time" programme . . . is a carefully reasoned out programme, which, as the I.L.P. states in its resolution, "aims at the immediate raising of the standard of life of the working classes and the transference of the key sources of power within Capitalism to the Community." That is a line of policy which does not mean "the overthrow of the capitalist system."

The reference to "Raising the immediate standard of life" of the workers was a phrase that could fit in well with the slogans of social reformers of all brands. Reference had been made to the 30,000 members which the I.L.P. claimed. It would be interesting to learn how many of these understood Socialism. The membership of the I.L.P. had seriously declined in recent years, whilst the membership of the Socialist Party was



growing. The Socialist Party is concerned with making Socialists, not enrolling large numbers attracted by reform theories and ignorant of Socialism. The I.L.P. had a large number of M.P.'s, it is true, elected on a programme of reforms by non-Socialists and committed to the support of the Labour Party, which, in turn, was dependent on Liberal votes. Years ago, the I.L.P. made compacts with the Liberal Party at Leicester, Halifax and in other constituencies. At the last General Election the Labour Party exchanged their support for the support of Mr. Lloyd George and his section of the Liberal Party. The I.L.P., a short time ago, allowed Mr. H. N. Brailsford to advocate a definite alliance with the Liberal Party. The I.L.P. was not even united on the merits of the particular reforms to be held out to the workers as a bait for votes. All kinds of views and doctrines were expounded by the I.L.P., but not Socialism. In Gateshead, the Labour candidate, Ernest Bevin, at the last General Election issued a leaflet enjoining Liberals to vote Labour. During the War the I.L.P. allowed its members to vote war credits and to take office in the Liberal-Conservative-Labour Coalition Government. Prominent members of the I.L.P. appeared on recruiting platforms and assisted in the prosecution of the War. Mr. Keir Hardie wrote in the *Merthyr Pioneer*, November 27th, 1914:—

I have never said or written anything to dissuade our young men from enlisting; I know too well all there is at stake.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald contrived to give the appearance of opposing the War, but his attitude merely showed that he did not believe that "national interests" were at stake. On August 3rd, 1914, he said in the House of Commons:—

I want to say to this House, and to say it without equivocation, if the Right Hon. Gentleman had come here to-day and told us that our country is in danger, I do not care what party he appealed to, or to what class he appealed, we would be with him and behind him. If this is so, we will vote him what money he wants. Yes, and we will go further. We will offer him ourselves if the country is in danger.

The attitude of the Socialist Party to the War was clear and definite. We opposed it from the commencement and stated the Socialist position. We were the only party to remain steadfast to Socialist principles. The principles of the Socialist Party were erected upon the teachings of Marx, upon

the basis of the Materialist View of History, the recognition of the class struggle, and the necessity for the enlightened and conscious aim of the workers to capture the political machinery for the institution of the Socialist Commonwealth. We had no reform programme, like the I.L.P., to deflect the workers from the need for emancipation, and had no use for leaders, good or bad. The I.L.P. by their activities side-tracked the workers by promises of tangible benefits now, which could not be obtained. They therefore showed their affinity to all the other parties of capitalism. It was a party helping to maintain capitalism, and therefore useless to the workers. The Socialist Party alone were concerned with the need for emancipation, and pointed the way to the ending of wage-slavery and exploitation in all its forms.

(At this point a general discussion of 30 minutes took place, in which members of both parties joined. Persons unattached to either party also spoke.)

(To be continued in next issue.)

## HEAD OFFICE.

Meetings will be held at 42, Great Dover Street, on Sunday evenings, at 8 p.m., as follows:—

6th March .. Speaker and Subject not yet fixed.

13th March .. "Reform or Revolution"

Speaker - R. Innes

20th March .. Speaker and Subject not yet fixed.

27th March .. "Is Force the Road to Power?"

Speaker - A. Kohn.

All invited. Admission free. Questions & discussion.

## STEPNEY.

A MEETING will be held at  
ST. GEORGE'S LIBRARY, CABLE STREET, E.1  
on Wednesday, 30th March.

Speaker - A. KOHN.

Subject - "Is Force the Road to Socialism?"

Admission free. All invited.  
Questions and Discussions. Commence 8 p.m.

## LEYTON

A MEETING will be held at the  
TRADES HALL, GROVE HOUSE,  
HIGH ROAD, LEYTON  
on Sunday, 20th March, at 8 p.m.

Speaker - D. RUSSELL.

Subject - "Capitalism and Morals."

All invited. Admission free. Questions and Discussion

## MR. WALTON NEWBOLD MAKES A CONFESSION.

Writing in the *One Big Union Bulletin* (Winnipeg, November 26th, 1931), Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold makes a confession of political faith, or rather lack of faith, which is intended to be startling and is certainly interesting. It will not be understood unless it is remembered how much and often Mr. Newbold's political views have changed. He has found a home for himself at different periods in the Fabian Society, the I.L.P. and the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the I.L.P. again, the Social-Democratic Federation, and then at the last General Election in MacDonald's National Labour group. It now appears from Mr. Newbold's article in the *O.B.U. Bulletin* that he never had faith in any of his parties. He says that although he has four times stood for Parliament, he never—

regarded the capture of a majority of seats in the House of Commons as in any sense a step to power. All that it could be was a step to enlightenment in the hollowness of the whole system of "democracy."

He never expected "the Labour Government to do anything but to prove the bankruptcy of reformism."

He once ran as a Communist and claimed at the time that his constituency was converted to Communism (actually he got in on a reformist programme and with the backing of the Labour Party).

Now he declares that it was "enough to make a cat laugh," that anyone should have supposed that either he or Saklatvala was a Communist. Incidentally, it would be interesting to hear Saklatvala's views on this.

Newbold opposed Churchill at Epping in 1929. At the time Newbold was trying to raise funds through the *O.B.U. Bulletin* and stated that he ran as a Socialist. We were able at the time to point out that Newbold had one story for Winnipeg and a very different story for his constituents at Epping. Now he declares that he only opposed Churchill in order to prevent the Tories from putting up another Tory, his object being to secure the election of Churchill.

All of this is interesting, but, like many confessions, it hides more than it discloses. We flatly do not believe it. When Mr. Newbold pretends that his woolly-headed support for all kinds of anti-working-class

policies was part of an astute and long-sighted manoeuvre, he is deceiving himself. It was Newbold himself who was taken in by these series of fraudulent policies, and his super-cleverness is just a face-saving afterthought.

If Newbold was so clever, he might explain how he came to land himself in his present position of being thoroughly mistrusted by every organisation of which he has been a member, as well as by the small number of organisations to which he has not yet turned his attention.

To Mr. Newbold the workers have been a crowd of boobies to be led and inoculated with knowledge by the Machiavellian schemer, Newbold. He should ponder over the saying of Voltaire, that he who believes he can lead a great crowd of fools without a great store of knavery is a fool himself. H.

## HACKNEY BRANCH.

### A SOCIAL

WILL BE HELD AT

14a, GRAHAM ROAD, DALSTON,  
on Saturday, March 19th, at 7.30 p.m.

Admission free. Refreshments obtainable on the premise

## NEW PAMPHLETS.

On Sale Now:—

"Why Capitalism will not Collapse." Our View of the Crisis. Send for a copy. 16 pages 1d. (post free, 1½d.).

Now in Preparation:—

A pamphlet on the Socialist Party of Great Britain: What it is and what it stands for.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.

Readers in Auckland are invited to communicate with the secretary of the newly formed Auckland Branch of the S.P. of New Zealand:—Colin Smith, 97 Grafton Road.

## THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A Graham Road Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21, Bridge Street, Homerton, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month at 15, Grosvenor Street, Beverley Road. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poynings Road, Highgate, N.19.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 8, Cheltenham Road, E.10. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Sec., Edmund Howarth, 14, Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead. Branch meets Sunday, 7 p.m., Socialist Club, 25, Royal Arcade, Newcastle. Discussion after branch business.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary, J. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., W. Mays, 99, Oxford Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Sec. W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Rd., Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



THE  
**Socialist Standard**  
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LONDON, APRIL, 1932.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

**BRIAND:**  
**A LESSON IN LEADERSHIP**

So Briand, the famous French Parliamentarian, is dead, and as would be expected the newspapers have taken the opportunity to broadcast the story of his life. Reading it serves to emphasise the view, so often advanced in these columns, that people who allow themselves to be led are often led "up the garden."

We are told he started life humbly (as did most of our own labour leaders), but, being an opportunist, he soared to the heights of Premiership over the bodies of striking railwaymen. From being an "extremist" in his youth and helping to found "L'Humanite," now the organ of the French Communists, he used his knowledge thus gained to round up and arrest, not many years later, the whole of the strike leaders when assembled round the editorial table of that very journal! Throughout his career he wavered, at one time defending armaments at Washington, at another throwing a sop to the so-called Socialists in order to enlist their support for a return to power. As War Premier he rivalled Lloyd George in advocating a fight-to-a-finish policy, and as Foreign Minister in 1926 he joined the French National Government, even as our own labour leaders joined one in this country last year. The folly of one nation seems to be repeated in every other!

But let us not exaggerate the importance of M. Briand. Most of his actions echoed the wishes of the multitude; and is he a great man who thinks only as everybody else does? At intervals he changed places with other political messiahs, who had, for the moment, captured public support. But we notice no change in the conditions of the mass of people under them. There is

only one necessary characteristic about a leader and that is he must have followers. Take away the followers and he ceases to be a leader. It seems too obvious to need mentioning, but whenever a plea is raised for a new leader or whenever disgust is shown against an old one this truism appears to be forgotten.

The life of a political shepherd always follows the same plan. His early cryings in the wilderness strike the hearts (not heads) of the common men. A note of sympathy is detected and a vague hope springs in the breasts of the listeners that this plausible speaker who has interpreted their woes must see farther than they, and can lend a hand to help them out. A little more rhetoric, a little more sentiment, election excitement and airy gesticulation and our would-be leader is invested with the robes of office. He is acclaimed a prophet, a maker of history!

Now it is one thing to command a servant to perform a task or to elect a delegate to carry out your will—it is the exact reverse to elect a leader to put things right for you in his own way. Stowed away in his head may be stores of great ideas, but not necessarily all of the kind we should approve. Our interpreter has become a magician and asks for our sanction to foist upon us his mysterious box of tricks. He is no longer our delegate to carry out our commands, instead he is a leader, and we find, alas! that the road he takes is not always to our liking. In course of time we hear lamentations about his betrayal of his followers' interests. In 1926 it was Thomas, in 1931 Snowden and MacDonald. In the French Railway Strike of 1910 it was Briand.



The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds that the emancipation of the working class must be the task of the working class itself. There is no secret formula. The main outlines are set forth on the back of this periodical and can be grasped by any normal person. No need for a shepherd here—only those who do not know the way need to be led. Do you return home from work unaided? Of course—you know the way. Those who need a guide must come under one of the following groups:—

Those who are blind and cannot see.

Those who have forgotten.

Those who are ignorant and never knew.

Those who are being escorted forcibly to a destination they do not desire.

To us who do not come under one of these groups the notion of a leader is laughable. We are possessed of ordinary intelligence and can learn the only real road to freedom by a little reading and thinking.

As the machinery of Government—including the Army, Navy, Police, etc.—exists only to conserve for the capitalists the wealth taken from us, we must organise consciously to convert that machinery from an agent of oppression to one of emancipation when sufficient of us know, clearly and definitely, what we want, and how to get it; we can elect our delegates through the ballot box and see that they carry out our instructions.

They will not be great men, they will never be able to claim the grand title of leaders—but they cannot, obviously be misleaders. They will be our delegates, to fulfil our instructions, and the results will be on our own heads. Let us spread the knowledge and hasten that day.

M.

## POPLAR

MEETINGS will be held at

**POPLAR TOWN HALL**

(adjoining Poplar Station.)

on Sunday, April 3rd, 1932.

Speaker - - - - - A. KOHN.

Subject - "Fascism, Bolshevism, Socialism."

and Sunday April 17th, 1932.

Speaker - - - - - E. HARDY.

Subject - "Some Modern Objections to Socialism."

Admission free.  
Questions and Discussions.

All invited.  
Commence 8 p.m.

## THE SOCIALIST FORUM

### CAN RUSSIAN PEASANTS BE INDUSTRIALISED?

A correspondent writing from St. John (New Brunswick) asks some interesting questions about the possibility of making efficient factory workers out of the Russian peasants:—

Isaac Don Levine, author of the "Life of Stalin," . . . in a recent article in the New York Scribners' Magazine, would have us believe that a Dictatorship such as the one in Russia can by no manner of means create a proletariat, capable of working in machine industry in anything less than several generations or centuries. He implies that the Slav is racially an inferior type, not amenable to factory discipline, and a clumsy animal in other respects.

If it is true that an agricultural population is not of a type that can readily be adapted to machine production, and it takes generations of workers coming originally from rural districts to make mechanics, how can we account for the remarkable rise of German industry in the space of forty or fifty years up till about 1914? The majority of Germans, prior to 1860 or 1870, were villagers and farmers, and in a very few years after coming to the cities, turned out to be capable mechanics, and this same thing happened in other places. Any number of Polish, Hungarian and Balkan peasants who arrived in the United States prior to 1915, took their place in machine industry without any experience, and fitted right into the scheme of things, their children even more so, after them.

If the Soviet Government succeeds in obtaining the required number of capable technicians and foremen to manage the factories and shops built and building, in this five-year plan, what is there to prevent the transformation of millions of mujiks into machine tenders as has happened in other countries?

Yours, etc.,

M. WASSON.

Reply.

Not having seen the article by Mr. Levine we do not know what evidence he adduces to show either that Russian peasants or Slavs generally are incapable of being trained as industrial workers.

It is true that some employers (e.g., Ford Motors) in their selection of workers give preference to American or Canadian born, or to immigrants from Great Britain, Germany, etc., and often reject applicants from the more backward European States. There is, however, no evidence to show that the latter are unsuitable because of racial characteristics. An explanation is that some countries, having reached a fairly high level of capitalist development, have

framed their general and technical education in a way which produces workers suitable for up-to-date factory work. Workers from backward countries and rural areas are unlikely to possess the qualifications of training and education needed.

It is interesting to recall that in Great Britain, in the early days of the factory system, employers found the same difficulty in compelling handicraftsmen and peasants to fit themselves into the discipline of machine production.

The whole question of racial differences is discussed very thoroughly by Friedrich Hertz in his "Race and Civilization" (Published by Kegan Paul, London, 1928, and by the MacMillan Co., New York). He shows how old are the theories of racial superiority, and how completely they cancel each other out; for there is no race that at some period has not cherished the illusion of its own innate superiority. Hertz deals with the capacity for social progress and reached this conclusion:—

The differences between distant groups of one and the same linguistic family or race are greater than those between any two 'unrelated' races as a whole. This assertion can be proved up to the hilt. Therefore it follows from this that it is not racial character which has prevented the backward from progressing, but environmental influences." (P. 259.)

He gives a neat answer to the belief in the superior fitness for industrialism supposed to be possessed by non-Slav races by pointing out that early in the 19th century it was said that the Germans also were inherently a backward race. He quotes Genovesi as having written in 1820 that the Germans would never be able to develop a trade and commerce or produce a population like the French and English. A German writer when he first heard of railways being built was of the opinion that such things were of no good to Germany, because the German character was too easy-going (p. 59).

In Hertz's book there are a large number of illustrations of stupid theories of racial superiority being encouraged by ruling classes for their own interests. He shows, for example, how these theories were used by the Governments during the war.

As regards the Russian Five-Year Plan, the Soviet Government have banked very heavily on early success of their industrialisation schemes. The slowness with which peasants can be trained to equal the efficiency of workers in advanced capitalist countries is likely to present a very difficult

problem to the Government there, hardly less difficult than the problem would be if—as Mr. Levine suggests—the Slavs could for racial reasons, never be industrialised. The Russians themselves claim, with what justification we do not know, that they have every reason to be optimistic about their ability to produce skilled workers. According to Mr. J. C. Crowther (an English scientist who visited Russia):—"The Russians have evolved their own system. They say a raw worker can become as skilled in six months by this training as he would in four years casual work as an artisan's mate in the shops. They propose to put 700,000 workers through such courses in 1931" ("Industry and Education in Soviet Russia." Pub. Heinemann, 1932).

Ed. COMM.

### ENGELS AND MINORITY ACTION.

Islington, London, N.1.

Editor,

"The Socialist Standard."

Dear Comrade,

On page 77, Engels' "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," the writer, referring to the socialist revolution says: "Like every other social advance it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions."

This statement clearly shows that Engels was of the opinion that, given the necessary conditions and an intelligent minority, the establishment of a socialist system could become an accomplished fact, and seems to refute your teaching that it is necessary to have a class-conscious majority before a successful revolution could be guaranteed.

I should be pleased to have your opinion on this question, and thank you in anticipation for same.

Yours, etc.,

G. W. JONES (Jnr.).

Reply.

Our correspondent is completely mistaken about Engels' views. Engels did not believe that "an intelligent Minority" could establish Socialism. It will be seen that the only evidence our correspondent quotes in support of his view about Engels is a passage in which Engels makes no reference whatever either to majority or to minority action. If we turn to page 60 of the same work ("Socialism, Utopian and Scientific." Allen & Unwin edition) we find Engels writing this:—

It is the compelling force of anarchy in the production of society at large that more and more completely turns the great majority of men into proletarians; and it is the masses of the



proletariat again who will finally put an end to anarchy in production.

There is nothing here about minority action. Nor is there on page 86, where Engels says:—

The proletariat seizes the public power. . . .

In Engels' introduction to Marx's "The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850" (the introduction being written in 1895), Engels said:—

The day of surprise attacks has passed, the day when small but resolute minorities could achieve revolutions by leading the unwitting masses to the onslaught. Where the question is one of a complete transformation in the social organism, the masses must wittingly participate, must fully understand what they are about.

What Engels had in mind in the passage that our correspondent quotes is to emphasise that social changes do not come about because of ideas that have miraculously appeared in men's minds, out of nothing. The development of the economic forces makes possible certain social changes, and it is out of this material basis that the ideas of change arise. Marx put it clearly in his preface to the "Critique of Political Economy."

"No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces, for which there is room in it, have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation." (P. 12, Kerr Edition, 1911.)

ED. COMM.

#### THE PROGRAMME OF THE RUSSIAN MENSHEVIKS AND SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARIES.

A reader at St. John, New Brunswick, asks the following questions:—

What was the programme, or principles, in brief, of the Mensheviks and the Left Social Revolutionaries, now under a ban in Russia? Have these extinct organisations much in common with the S.P.G.B.?

Yours, etc.,

M. WASSON.

Reply.

In order to make our comments on these Russian organisations understandable we must first give some facts about them. The "Russian Social Democratic Party," which later split into two separate bodies, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, was formed in

1898. Its aim was declared to be Socialism. Its energies were largely taken up with problems of organisation, with the struggle for immediate demands (such as the right to organise in trade unions, the shorter working day) and with resisting the efforts of the Czarist Government to suppress its propaganda. From the first there were two wings in the Party, and in 1903 at the Party Congress at Geneva a split developed. The following statement concerning the split is taken from "The Labour International Handbook," published in May, 1921, by the Labour Publishing Co., Ltd., London. The Editor, R. Palme Dutt, is a well-known Communist.

It is important to note that there was no disagreement on the programme, which was adopted unanimously. The difference was one of tactics, and concerned (1) the importance to be attached to illegal work; and as the difference developed (2) the question of co-operating with bourgeois parties of the left. (P. 286.)

A Unity Congress was held in 1906, but the two sections continued to keep their separate organisations and journals. In 1912 they ran candidates against one another in the elections for the Fourth Duma ("Handbook," p. 287).

Both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks claimed (and still claim) to be Marxists.

The "Socialist Revolutionary Party" formed in 1901 did not claim to accept Marxist principles. They advocated and practised political association, which both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks condemned.

"In their social theory they looked above all to the peasants and the development of agricultural communes with a large local autonomy." ("Handbook," p. 288.)

The "Socialist Revolutionary Party," with a predominantly peasant membership, was much larger than the other parties, whose members were chiefly in the towns. The Mensheviks were less numerous than the Bolsheviks.

The "Left Socialist Revolutionaries" were a wing led by Spiridonova and Kamkov, who gave general support to the Bolsheviks in their seizure of power in 1917. They had seven seats on the Council of Commissaries until early in 1918, when they resigned as a protest against the Bolshevik policy of making peace with Germany.

The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries still have organisations and journals, with headquarters in Berlin.

In 1920 when a British Labour Delegation visited Russia the Mensheviks and

Socialist Revolutionaries each issued a full statement of their position. These were included in the Report of the Delegation (Published by the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, London).

If the Mensheviks could be judged solely on this declaration of Socialist principles there would be little to find fault with.

The S.R. declaration, on the other hand, contains little about principles, and is not in any real sense a Socialist declaration at all. It is merely a propaganda effort to justify the tactics of the S.R. Party and to blacken the Bolsheviks.

The important thing is that the Menshevik document referred to above, although issued by the Central Committee of the Party, does not give anything like a full and true picture. Rather it represents the views of certain individuals on Socialist principles, completely divorced from the actions of the Party. This characteristic of the Mensheviks is one often found in the Labour Parties of Western Europe and elsewhere.

Let us look at certain of their actions.

The Mensheviks permitted their members to support the war—in flat contradiction of the Socialist principles they were supposed to understand and accept.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries (and the Bolsheviks) belonged to the Second International before the war. They accepted the absurd claim that that body and its affiliated parties were Socialist.

The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries are still affiliated to the "Labour and Socialist International" and still push the reforms which make up the only stock-in-trade of that non-Socialist body.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries have no more in common with the S.P.G.B. than any of the other reformist parties which find it convenient to cover over their reformist programmes with a gloss of Marxian phrases and ideas.

ED. COMM.

#### SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT GOLD.

Elvaston Place, S.W.

Editor of the Socialist Standard.

Sir,

In October, you wrote: "The illusion that lack of gold has anything to do with the main problem is easily dispelled." Is trade depression not a main problem? No doubt a large part of the world's economic difficulties are due to the lack of any plan in *laissez-faire* production and to the inequitable distribution of purchasing power resulting from private exploitation

of the sources of wealth. But the best chance of modifying these conditions lies in the trades unions' membership being increased, and the number of their members varies inversely with the percentage unemployed. If the supply of gold is inadequate for the alleged requirements of the central banks and their clients, then primary prices will be forced down; such a fall in prices involves reduction in the demand for manufactures, and inadequate profit or prospective losses deter the entrepreneur class from operations which increase employment and wages. There is almost complete short-term correspondence between the relation of primary prices to costs and the numbers unemployed, while with the upward trend of prices from 1896 to 1915 there was only two-thirds the unemployment of the preceding twenty years when the trend of prices was downward. Thorp & Mitchell's *Business Annals* shows seven times as many years of prosperity per year of depression for the upward periods, 1849-73 and 1896-1920 as for that from 1873 to 1896. Your reference to the "very great increase in the supply of gold from 1890 to 1914" shows that you do not appreciate the meaning of the term, "relative gold supply," i.e., the actual supply relative to an increasing demand. This rose but slowly from the year 1896, allowing for an average increase in prices of about 2 per cent. a year from the disastrously low level of 1894-98. Both employment and the standard of living, however, were much higher at the end of the period than at the beginning. In 1926, real wages in the United States, according to Professor P. H. Douglas, were one-quarter higher than in 1890-99, while for Great Britain the *New Survey of London* gives a figure one-third higher than in 1890.

With regard to the second part of the article, "The Gold Standard and the Crisis," I should like to say that (1) a practical policy must adapt itself to changing conditions. At the beginning of 1931, Mr. Keynes—who was mainly responsible for the Macmillan Report—considered that Great Britain would be in a much stronger position for leading the world out of the depression if sterling remained tied to gold. In the summer he no longer held that view. (2) Mr. Norman's opinion as to the efficacy of Bank Rate is of no importance. Under the circumstances, a 9 per cent. rate would have been ineffective, but would probably have caused a panic. It might have been better if we had abandoned gold without first borrowing and then being pushed off, but to contend that the Bank should have maintained payments in gold, come what might, is to imagine that gold parity is an end in itself. The essential—as opposed to the ostensible—reason for high money rates is a sharp rise in the level of prices. And prices were falling heavily.

GEOFFREY BIDDULPH.

Reply.

Mr. Biddulph's remarks are only distantly related to the articles which he seeks to criticise. Further they reveal a complete lack of understanding of the Socialist view of the depression. Our contention is that the present crisis is merely a fresh manifestation of an ever-recurring phenomenon



of capitalism. As such it does not create any new problem for the workers, whose political object should be the substitution of capitalist society by Socialism. Consequently the workers, as a class, have nothing to gain from any of the various measures—from tariffs and wheat quotas to currency reform—put forward to rescue capitalism from the mire in which its own inherent defects have landed it. By whatever means the depression is ended, capitalism, as a system, will remain intact. In other words the propertyless condition of the workers, the ending of which is, in our view, their sole concern, will persist. Reforms designed to make that condition less oppressive have no attractions for us. When we discussed the present trade depression it was with two objects in mind. In the first place we wished to show how the fundamental cause of this crisis—as of its predecessors—was the fact that goods are produced by wage-labour for profit and not for use. Secondly, we sought to refute certain of the explanations of the crisis that have been advanced, and to expose the incompetence in high places that it has revealed. As we carefully pointed out, we are not concerned to take sides on the question of gold versus managed standard; we merely gave an account of the events that led up to the abandonment of the gold standard by this country.

Having made clear our position let us turn to Mr. Biddulph. Although he does not specifically say so, it would appear that his view is:—

(1) That the depression is attributable to a fall in the general price-level, itself the consequence of the fact that the rate of increase of the world's gold has been less than the rate of increase in "the alleged requirements of Central Banks and their clients" for gold.

(2) That a rise in general prices is required to end the depression.

(3) That rising prices are desirable from the point of view of the workers.

The second and third points can be taken together. Even if it is conceded that the depression could be ended by a currency policy that would raise world prices, would the basic conditions of the workers be altered? For one thing would unemployment be eliminated? The most that Mr. Biddulph can claim for a period of rising prices is that unemployment (on the experience of 1896-1915) might be reduced to two-

thirds of what it is at present. It is just because Capitalism cannot provide a full life for all, even given the most favourable business conditions, that we are Socialists. Unemployment is a symptom of a defective economic organisation and the defects it indicates remain when unemployment is relatively low as when it is relatively high. This is what reformers and those who talk of "years of prosperity" overlook when they urge their reforms and the taking of steps to restore "prosperity."

So far as Mr. Biddulph's first contention is concerned, that is open to two criticisms. Firstly, if it is correct, then Capitalism stands condemned on account of the incompetence of capitalists, for from his use of the word "alleged" in the phrase "alleged requirements of the Central Banks and their clients" for gold it is clear that these requirements were in his view capable of being reduced. In other words, the relative shortage of gold, which he believes to be at the root of the trouble, need not have manifested itself if the world's leading bankers had possessed but an elementary knowledge of correct currency principles. This is to say that the crisis occurred because of the inability of those in charge of the financial machine to run it properly. A system of production under which there is such scope for incompetence to produce evil must stand condemned.

But in our view the crisis cannot be traced to monetary causes. Prices did not fall because of the decline in the relative gold supply but because, as periodically does and must happen under capitalism, goods were produced beyond the capacity of the market to absorb them.

The facts do not support the contrary view advanced by Mr. Biddulph.

The period from 1925 to 1929 was, for the world as a whole, one of increasing economic activity. Even here the national income was rising, and U.S.A. enjoyed the greatest boom in its history. The increase in the supply of gold during that period must have been sufficient to carry the increased volume of business, since economic expansion in fact occurred. In the face of this Mr. Biddulph's theory requires that the rate of increase in the gold supply after 1929 was less than during the preceding 4 years. Unfortunately for the theory, however, the figures show exactly the opposite. According to the estimates of Mr. Kitchen (see "The Times," February 18th, 1932), in the

years from 1925 to 1928 the world's gold production increased, as compared with the preceding year, by nil, 1.8 per cent., .04 per cent. and 1.3 per cent. respectively and in 1929 was 1.1 per cent. less than in 1928. On the other hand, in 1930 output rose by 3.5 per cent. above the 1929 level and in 1931 was even 4.4 per cent. more than in 1930.

But apart altogether from the question whether the relative supply of gold was or was not sufficient to maintain the 1929 price level, Mr. Biddulph has no justification for stating, without further evidence, that the crisis resulted from a fall in general prices. The price level was falling continuously up to 1929, yet the slump did not start until that year and indeed, as already stated, the period from 1925 to 1929 was one of economic expansion. This last fact destroys the whole of Mr. Biddulph's case and completely disproves his implied assertion that periods of falling prices are periods of dwindling trade, reduced employment and declining "prosperity." In this connection it is worth looking at some figures. Between 1924 and 1929 wholesale prices fell about 20 per cent. During the same period the Board of Trade index of industrial production rose about 14 per cent., and the numbers of insured workers in employment rose by nearly 9 per cent., although admittedly the percentage unemployed rose from 10.7 per cent. to 11.1 per cent.

Of those, such as Mr. Biddulph, who relate trade activity to rising prices, Mr. D. H. Robertson, the well-known economist, has well written that they speak "with the voice of the inflationist entrepreneur of all ages, claiming that the scales must always be weighed in (their) favour if (they) are to do (their) job properly" (The International Gold Problem, 1931, page 146).

So much for Mr. Biddulph's main argument. The other points in his letter must, because of the lack of space, be dealt with only briefly.

(1) He implies that the standard of living rises with rising prices and vice versa. Sauerbeck's index for 1873 was 111 and for 1896 was 61, a fall of about 45 per cent. Would Mr. Biddulph contend that the standard of living was lower in 1896 than in 1873?

(2) So far as the last paragraph of his letter is concerned, we regret that we cannot, without evidence, accept Mr. Bid-

dulph's view of the efficacy of the Bank Rate as being of greater value than the view of Mr. Montague Norman.

(3) As we do not enjoy the personal confidence of Mr. Keynes we are interested to be informed of his changes of opinion by Mr. Biddulph. We had, however, thought that Mr. Keynes had been opposed to the gold standard for some years. As long ago as 1925, Mr. Keynes was opposing a return to the gold standard, and advocating a "managed" currency. (See "Nation," March, 1925.) The "Nation" (supposed to echo the opinions of Mr. Keynes) were attacking the gold standard early in 1931.

(4) Finally, we would assure Mr. Biddulph that we fully appreciate the meaning of the term "relative gold supply." In fact, we understood the phrase to have been introduced into economic discussion by Prof. Cassel, and that among economists it had the meaning given to it by him. For Mr. Biddulph's guidance we quote from "Fundamental Thoughts in Economics," where Prof. Cassel writes: "I have introduced the conception of a relative gold supply, which is for any given year the actual gold supply divided by the normal gold supply." Mr. Biddulph might compare this definition with that given in his letter above.

B. S.

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**The Socialist Standard**

APRIL,



1932

**OUR 28th ANNUAL CONFERENCE.**

The Annual Conferences of the S.P.G.B. are not at all like the conferences of other political parties. Nothing ever happens at them that a press representative would regard as "news." Nobody makes passionate speeches about the sufferings of mankind, or the wickedness of political opponents. We have no window dressing. No resolutions are passed calling upon governments, over whom we have no control whatever, to do this that or the other thing because we say so—as is the practice of the so-called Labour organisations. Delegates do not call each other rogues or anti-Socialists. Most amazing of all to our opponents we have no faction fight between left, right, and centre wings. We have no wings, for we are all Socialists, all agreed about the end and the means. What then is there for our conference to do? We meet to review the work of the past year, to revise rules where necessary, to exchange views on methods of propaganda and possible improvements, and in general to make our party a more effective instrument.

This year the delegates met in a happy frame of mind. In each of the past 3 or 4 years some part of the load of difficulty under which the Party works has been lifted from our shoulders. More new members have come in, funds have been more ade-

quate to our needs, our removal to larger premises has justified itself, and all because the tide is slowly and almost imperceptibly turning in our direction. The year 1931 was, in regard to membership and in other respects, a record year, and the confidence of the delegates reflected this. Our propaganda was on a larger scale, the sales of *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD* and of pamphlets increased, and in one way or another the Party is becoming known to a larger circle here and abroad. From several countries we have encouraging reports of the headway made by our companion parties.

This does not mean that the Conference was self-satisfied. On the contrary there was a noticeable anxiety, particularly among provincial delegates, lest our immersion in the tedious and back-breaking work of past years should have made us slow to appreciate the changing conditions around us. So the Conference pressed for more new pamphlets without delay, and special consideration of the task of training new members, and views were expressed on the possibility of increasing the size of *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD*, a matter that will be fully gone into in the near future. Steps will also be taken to extend the advertising campaign through which we have gained many new supporters during 1931.

There is every reason to expect that the coming propaganda season during the summer months is going to be the best we have ever had, and that our Conference in 1933 will be a milestone in our history.

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**MARX AND A PROFESSOR.**

The critics of Marx are many and varied. Chiefly they belong to two camps: those who are completely ignorant of his life and writings, and those who, though acquainted with both, misrepresent them deliberately, or do not understand them.

Of this latter kind of critic a correspondent draws our attention to an effort to dispose of Marx by Professor Hearnshaw, of the London University, in a book called "A Survey of Socialism."

The professor's criticism is levelled chiefly at the Materialist Conception of History and the Labour Theory of Value. The crux of his criticism of the latter is the so-called contradiction between the theory of value as outlined in Vol. I of "Das Capital," and the theory of the price of production in Vol. III. As this was dealt with in the March S.S., this article will be mainly confined to the Materialist Conception of History.

Concerning this, the professor cannot discover any contradictions from Marx's own writings. Instead, he finds that it has been "exploded," "abandoned," and "explained away" by its adherents, among them the "faithful Engels."

Engels is quoted on page 238 as follows:

Marx and I are partially responsible for the fact that the younger men have sometimes laid more stress on the economic side than it deserves.

This is described as a recantation from Marx. But why? Engels says, "The younger men laid more stress on the economic side than it deserves." He did not say, as Mr. Hearnshaw would have his readers believe, that the economic side deserves no stress.

Mr Hearnshaw displays great ability in quoting extracts from the writings of Marxists, most of them dragged from their context, to show that Marx has been abandoned. One example is the following extract from page 282 of Mr. Hearnshaw's book. He says:

In particular, the Marxian eschatology is as completely discredited and derelict as is the mediæval hell. "History," confessed Engels in 1895, "proved us wrong, and showed the views which we then held to be illusions." O shade of Marx! What will not the injudicious Engels confess now you are no longer near him to impose discretion?

The quotation from Engels, "History proved us wrong . . ." is from his introduction to Marx's "Class Struggles in France," and is trickily used to imply that

the illusions were the Materialist Conception of History and the Labour Theory of Value. Whereas, students of Marx know that Engels was writing of the tactics to be pursued by the workers, the question of constitutional methods versus the barricades. The illusions referred to were the barricades!

And, be it remembered, Mr. Hearnshaw is not a political peddler, but a professor of the London University.

Two extracts are taken from E. Belfort Bax's book, "Outlooks from the New Standpoint," and quoted on p. 239 of Hearnshaw's book.

The first is:—

Although economics are the basis of human existence, they are the basis merely and not the complete whole.

The use made of this by Mr. Hearnshaw is such as to convey to the superficial reader that Marx's case is that economics are the whole of existence. In reality, however, this particular quotation, though weakly stated, says nothing that Marx did not say. It is a Marxist truism. The second quotation is:

There are certain human interests whose development cannot be interpreted economically.

With regard to this quotation we do not attempt to defend Belfort Bax's position.

It would be as well, before proceeding further, to state what is the working basis of the Materialist Conception of History. It is, as stated by Engels in the preface to the Communist Manifesto:

That in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch.

In much of his writing on the Materialist Conception of History Bax diverged from the Marxian view. He says, for example, in the book from which Mr. Hearnshaw quotes, "Outlooks from the New Standpoint" (p. 132).

It would be difficult to deduce the Crusades from the conditions of the mediæval manor of the eleventh century.

Again:

There is much in the history of the first two centuries of the Christian era which cannot be directly referred to economic causes.

It will be noticed that Belfort Bax does not say that the underlying causes of events are not economic, but merely that he finds certain events "difficult to deduce" and



others which "cannot be directly referred to economical causes." This does not dispute the fundamental Marxian proposition that the intellectual and political history of an epoch are to be explained in the mode of production then prevailing; a proposition which Belfort Bax emphasises repeatedly. It is, however, his obscure and ambiguous use of English (unusual with Bax) that gives Mr. Hearnshaw the opportunity to accuse him of making a "tolerably complete evacuation from Marx."

Mr. Hearnshaw gives a typical illustration of his inability to understand the Materialist Conception of History or of his deliberate misrepresentation of it on page 105. He says that it does not take into account "sex attraction and religious aspiration . . . they cannot be interpreted as consequences of economic antecedents." It might surprise Mr. Hearnshaw and Marx's critics to know that it does take these into account; that it does not interpret them as "consequences of economic antecedents." What the Materialist Conception of History does say is that the forms which "sex attraction and religious aspiration" take change from age to age; and that these forms can only be explained and understood in the light of the mode of production and consequent social organisation of the age in which they exist."

Mr. Hearnshaw summarises his arguments on page 241:

The Materialist Conception of History may partially explain the evolution of primitive barbaric society which was wholly engrossed in the struggle for the means of existence, but it does not explain the evolution of civilised society in which other and higher interests prevail; it leaves out of account—unexplained and wholly inexplicable—religion, patriotism, devotion to ideal causes, martyrdoms, spiritualities; it does not explain Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Luther, Tolstoi; nay, it does not explain Marx himself. For Marx, assuredly, was not moved by economic considerations.

It will only be possible to deal with a few of the points raised here.

That primitive society was "wholly engrossed in the struggle for the means of existence" can only be wholly explained—not partially—by the fact that the means of production were primitive and had not developed to the point where it was possible to produce wealth easily, giving time for leisure, making it possible for any to live without working, or of living on the products of another class. In order to survive its struggle with nature the primitive social

organisation demanded equal co-operation between its members. This equality was not an ethical creed, but a necessity which arose from the struggle. Class society emerged from primitive society when a mode of production had developed which destroyed this co-operative character of primitive society. It could not arise before. Nomadic tribes following their flocks and herds discovered a new method of production in agriculture, and laid the foundation of a new form of private property. The process was a gradual one, spread over a long period before society based on private property became clearly formed. The important point is that the change was determined by a change in the mode of production. The final result was class divided society, which gave leisure to, and made it possible for, certain classes to be other than "wholly engrossed in the struggles for the means of existence."

Professor Hearnshaw refers also to patriotism. According to the dictionary patriotism means the "pride and love for one's own country." Not only does the Materialist Conception of History explain it, but nothing else can. In feudal society modern productive forces did not exist. Economically, the manorial village was almost a complete and self-sufficing unit in itself. It needed little or no intercourse with the outside world. When it did that intercourse was often "unfriendly." Feudal history is one long record—so far as the nation is concerned—of internal conflicts. The conception of patriotism and nationalism did not come into existence until developments and changes in the methods of production were taking place, which gradually undermined the economic basis and social organisation of Feudalism. "Patriotism" and "England" grew simultaneously with the extension of the market. Mr. G. B. Shaw illustrates this point in his play, "St. Joan," which was cast in the 15th century. He makes one of his characters, an English nobleman, say:

A Frenchman! Where did you pick up that expression? Are these Burgundians and Bretons and Picards and Gascons beginning to call themselves Englishmen? They actually talk of France and England as their countries. Theirs, if you please! What is to become of me and you if that way of thinking comes into fashion? Men cannot serve two masters. If this cant of serving their country takes hold of them, good-bye to the authority of their feudal lords, and good-bye to the authority of the church. That is, good-bye to you and me.

The rising capitalist class were a "patriotic" class at the same time that they were a revolutionary class. It was this patriotism which gave expression to the aspirations of the growing capitalist class that Dr. Johnson, the famous defender of waning feudal privileges, referred to when he said that "patriotism was the last refuge of the scoundrel."

Changes in the mode of production have broken down the economic unity of the village, have made nations—and empires. Patriotism and Nationalism reflect this development and correspond to it.

#### MARX, CHRIST—AND OTHER MATTERS.

When the learned professor speaks of explaining Christ and Marx he obviously means the ideas for which they stood in their time.

The basis of Christ's teaching, i.e., the idea of the "One God," reflected social forms that then existed. The ground for this conception had been prepared by the dissolution of tribal life, and the destruction of the tribal gods which synchronised with the growth of the Roman Empire. Christ came (or the Christian teaching arose) after the zenith of the Roman Empire had been passed and decay was setting in. The conditions of the slave-classes in the Empire were at their lowest. Appalling poverty, social disintegration and oppression. Christianity blessed the poor and cursed the rich; extolled poverty and promised riches—in heaven. It did not promise recompense on this earth. The economic conditions of the time did not make possible any proposal that would remedy their slavery on this earth. It was perfectly natural then that deliverance from these conditions should take the form of a belief that promised recompense in a "life to come." This belief fostered—and taught—a tolerance of the conditions of this world, and submissiveness to slavery. The ruling class discovered this and adopted Christianity. Subsequent ruling-classes also recognised it and made use of it; at the same time adapting its theological aspects to suit changing conditions, and their class interests. Hence the changing form of Christianity, from Catholicism to Protestantism, and to the modern abstract forms which have abandoned some of the crudities that were originally attached to it.

There is some similarity in the misery and poverty of the slaves in Ancient Rome

and those of the modern proletariat. There is this difference, however, capitalism suggests an alternative on this earth. The tendency which characterises the modern proletariat is not, therefore, like that of the slaves of Rome, to give expression to their discontent by embracing a creed which "despairs of this world," but it is to express its discontent politically. This it does by supporting, and in withdrawing its support from, one political party after another. Sooner or later, knowledge, and the lessons that come from experience, will lead to an understanding of the present order of society. When that point is reached the working class will fulfil its historic mission, gain political power, and establish Socialism. Thus the conditions of capitalism drive the workers to give expression to their discontent in material forms and away from religious forms. Hence, the growing irreligion of the workers.

One of the easiest (and very common) methods of argument is to state what it is thought an opponent's views are, and then proceed to demolish them. Mr. Hearnshaw (wittingly or not) has used this method. Though Mr. Hearnshaw's book has over four hundred pages and contains nearly five hundred quotations, there is not one quotation which clearly states Marx's view on the Materialist Conception of History. Instead, there are hundreds of quotations from books written mostly by anti-Socialists which purport to state Marx's view. And this, despite the fact that the fundamental principles of the Materialist Conception of History which are outlined in the preface to Marx's "Critique of Political Economy" could be stated in a few pages. In view of this, the following from page 230 of Mr. Hearnshaw's book is just cheek:

The second thing to be considered is this: that the Marxian system, since its formulation in 1894, has been entirely shattered by criticism, so that it is now a moral and intellectual ruin which no impartial thinker professes to regard as an intact structure.

And nearly forty years after 1894 the learned professor and "impartial thinker," regardless of the fact that the "Marxian system has been shattered" finds that it is necessary to do so again. There is an endless procession of those who add their "mite" to the shattering of the "Marxian system"; though it might be thought that having once shattered it into a "moral and intellectual ruin" it would be unnecessary to do so again. But, alas! the problems of



capitalism arouse ever fresh interest in the "Marxian system" and prove the logic of its analysis. Where capitalism appears, there translated into every language, appears the "Marxian system" also. And it will be so until capitalism is abolished.

Further points from our correspondent's letter dealing with other aspects of socialist criticism will appear in a subsequent issue.

H. W.

### A DEBATE WITH THE I.L.P.

(Continued).

#### LAST SPEECH FOR THE I.L.P.

Mr. CROOKS, in his closing speech, stated that he was delighted with the trend of the debate, and pleased with the fair way in which Howarth had put his case. There had been a complete absence of abuse, which he much appreciated. However, Howarth's quotations from papers and periodicals had tried to indicate that the I.L.P. were a bad lot. He considered the actual difference between the principles of the I.L.P. and S.P.G.B. was small. The real difference was one of method, and in all ideas of method there is bound to be a disparity of opinion. Are you going to get Socialism by preaching, which is the only method of the S.P.G.B.? The S.P.G.B. certainly did not carry out its policy to run candidates. If they did get their candidates into the House of Commons, what would these members do? Sit with folded arms and not attempt to better the conditions of the workers at present? Education must be followed by practical work, and it is in practical work that men come into conflict. The I.L.P. will go forward and achieve Socialism in spite of the fact that they might sully orthodox Socialist principles. While you live by bread, you must not forget the bread. The revolutionary period is here, so all workers should support the I.L.P., which is a real practical force for Socialism, and not a negative force like the S.P.G.B.

#### LAST SPEECH FOR THE S.P.G.B.

HOWARTH, in winding up the debate, pointed out that the open discussion had shown that there were many misconceptions as to the object and principles of the Socialist Party. The terms of the debate had been dictated by the I.L.P., and he (Howarth) had protested that not sufficient time had been allowed to enable the speakers to state their cases adequately.

The notion that the Socialist Party refrained from putting candidates forward until they were certain of a majority was ridiculous. Candidates for municipal elections had been put up, and advantage had been taken of these elections to spread the knowledge of Socialism. It is true that we have not secured the election of candidates, but that is because there are not sufficient Socialists to elect them. No doubt our candidates would be successful if we ran on the same basis as the I.L.P. by promising immediate benefits. As Socialists, it was not our desire to secure office by false pretences. I.L.P. candidates were elected by pandering to the ignorance of the workers. I.L.P. members elected to public bodies are powerless to state the Socialist case. They have no mandate to do so, as they were elected by non-Socialist votes. The Socialist Party has no programme of social reform to dangle before the workers. The immediate need of the workers is emancipation. Palliation merely serves to keep capitalism in existence, and invariably fails to palliate. The complete failure of the Labour Government in Britain and also in Australia demonstrates the utter absurdity of expecting to get rid of the evils of capitalism without getting rid of the system from which these evils spring. The notion that members of the Socialist Party ignore the need for bread is fantastic. Members of the S.P.G.B. were forced to take part in the every-day struggle for bread. They did so as members of Trades Unions, but we never failed to point out that the workers are always at a disadvantage under capitalism. It was because we realised the need for bread and all the amenities of life that we realised the limitations of Trade Union action and pointed to the abolition of capitalism as the sole means of access to the means of life. The idea that a party can work for Socialism and Social Reform at the same time is entirely contrary to fact. The I.L.P.'s activities in the direction of social reform measures completely overshadow any interest in Socialism. Besides, if reform measures could give the workers security or substantially better their conditions, all interest in Socialism would be killed. The adoption of the entire Labour programme would leave capitalism intact, with all its corresponding defects. In spite of the enormous energy spent in promoting social reforms, more persons are compelled to seek parish relief than at any other time

in history. The differences between the I.L.P. and the Socialist Party are not superficial, as suggested by Mr. Crooks, but fundamental. The I.L.P. chases the will-o'-the-wisp of social reform, while the Socialist Party opposes all sections of the master class. The I.L.P. imagine that Society is at this moment in a state of transition from capitalism to Socialism, and many of its proposals are put forward as transitory measures. The transition to Socialism can only commence after the capture of political power by the conscious efforts of the workers. That is the beginning of the transition stage. Reform measures merely strengthen the existing system and assist its smooth running. That is why the capitalist class support and institute reform measures. The terms of existence for the workers are dictated by the possessing class. The I.L.P. cannot alter that with all their "practical" measures. The Liberal and Conservative Parties could outdo the I.L.P. or Labour Party at the game of reform. The capitalists could safely adopt many items on the I.L.P. programme without endangering their social system. That is what they have done, and will do, to stave off the demand for a fundamental change. He (Howarth) submitted that sufficient had been said to encourage those present to undertake a full investigation of the Socialist Party's case, and he would invite all to read the Party's literature with a view to acquiring the requisite knowledge.

The usual vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the proceedings.

C. S. BATES.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### KEIR HARDIE AND THE LIBERALS.

For years we pointed out that the late Keir Hardie never had an understanding of Socialism and was merely a Liberal. It is amusing to read that at a Conference of the Union of University Liberal Societies at Cambridge, a Liberal proposed that Keir Hardie should be recognised as one of them. A resolution was passed welcoming the formation of a new Radical Party, and the mover, a Mr. E. G. Solliou, said:

"The new Party should have a left-centre inclination, and should be founded on the teaching of Keir Hardie."

("Daily Herald," March 23rd, 1932.)

The I.L.P. and other "left-centre Liberals" will have to bestir themselves to prevent this body-snatching.

\* \* \*

### MR. HERBERT MORRISON EVADES THE ISSUE.

The "Clarion" makes entertaining reading for those who wish to study the Labour Party "intellectuals" at play. A quarrel has been going on as to whether state capitalism as it exists in the Post Office is more or less socialistic than State capitalism as it exists in public utility corporations. One group stands firmly by Nationalisation, while the other group denounces this as being a nineteenth century idea, now replaced by the "new Socialism" of public utility corporations. Belonging to the public utility group is Major Attlee, former P.M.G., and advocate of a public utility for the Post Office. He admits that the Post Office (so long praised by him and his Party as being an instance of Socialism) is "the outstanding example of collective capitalism" ("New Statesman," November 7th, 1931). Mr. Herbert Morrison is also a public utility advocate. In the "Clarion" (February, 1932) he argues, with his tongue in his cheek, that his London Passenger Transport Bill (which guaranteed their property rights to the shareholders), is Socialism, because the shareholders would no longer have the legal right of control that they now possess. Mr. Morrison knows quite well that Socialism involves social ownership of the means of life, and that the exchange of one kind of share for another kind does not deprive the capitalist of his ownership, and is not Socialism.



All the same he knows how to sling a pretty brick in controversy. Having been told by a defender of the Post Office that a man is a Socialist or not a Socialist and that nationalisation is Socialism, Mr. Morrison replies ("Clarion" March) by pointing out that the S.P.G.B. would laugh in the face of anyone who made such a statement, and would say that such a man "is not a Socialist at all, but a mere advocate of State capitalism."

This is true enough. But Mr. Morrison did not add that the Socialist's objections to public utilities are precisely the same as his objections to nationalisation.

What we would like to have from Mr. Morrison is his defence of public utility capitalism against the case for Socialism.

#### LABOUR GOVERNMENT IN ACTION.

The theory on which the Labour Party and I.L.P. were built up is that the spectacle of a Labour Government at work so impresses and enthuses the workers that they go on to ask for more and more "Labour" reforms of capitalism. On February 27th the Labour Party M.P.'s and candidates held a meeting to inquire into the actions of the late Labour Government. *Reynolds's Illustrated News*, the Co-operative-Labour paper, reporting the meeting, says:—

One or two speakers made a feeble and timid attempt to justify the record of the late Labour Government. (*Reynolds's*, 28th Feb.)

In other words, instead of celebrating the successful application of their theory, nobody could be found to put up a plausible defence of it.

#### THE SHRINKING I.L.P.

In the six years since February 1926 the I.L.P. has lost 422 branches, almost 40 per cent. of the total. The Reports to Annual Conferences give the following total number of branches in February of the years mentioned:—

1926	1,075
1929	746
1930	748
1931	712
1932	653

It was in this situation that the I.L.P. at its Easter Conference had to decide for or against continuing affiliation with the Labour Party. Would the happy days of Parliamentary seats and Governmental

Office be brought back again by remaining inside, or had the time now come for the I.L.P. to exploit working-class discontent independently? The way of the reformist vote-catcher is sometimes hard.

#### WHAT WILL MAXTON DO NOW?

The I.L.P. Conference delegates had before them three proposals, one for continued affiliation with the Labour Party, one for disaffiliation and a third for "conditional affiliation." Disaffiliation was rejected by 183 votes to 144, affiliation was rejected by 214 votes to 98, and the third proposal—typical of the I.L.P. in dodging the issue—was adopted by 250 votes to 53. The resolution calls for a revision of the Standing Orders of the Labour Party and it may be assumed that the I.L.P. will remain inside. The position now is that the I.L.P. repudiates the Standing Orders, but several of its members who stood as Labour candidates at the election have accepted them, including David Kirkwood, M.P., and Mr. E. F. Wise. And what now becomes of the recent assertions by Maxton, Buchanan, and others that for reasons other than the Standing Orders it is impossible for Socialists to remain inside the Labour Party? Doubtless they will not find it difficult to swallow their words—they have had much practice at this.

One piece of information given by the Chairman of the I.L.P., Mr. Fenner Brockway, deserves to be placed on record. The I.L.P. used to be satisfied with the Labour Party reform programme. Then a few years ago it announced that the old programme had been proved inadequate and that a new reform programme, miscalled "Socialism in Our Time," was the only adequate programme. Now Mr. Brockway in his address from the Chair (see *Daily Herald*, March 28th) admits that the I.L.P. is a reformist party and that its "Socialism in Our Time" is useless. He said that, in view of the present depression,

the gradualism of the Labour Party became pathetically inadequate; even the method of Socialism in our time became inadequate. It means that our policy must become revolutionary instead of reformist.

And then the Conference, as if to show the hollowness of the pretence that the reformist policy is going to be dropped, voted for continued affiliation with the Labour Party, although Brockway, Maxton and others know full well that there is no place

for revolutionary Socialism inside the Labour Party.

#### MR. JAMES DOUGLAS TRIPS UP.

It is one of the pet arguments of the journalists who serve the master class by attacking Socialism, that only capitalism can give the rewards necessary to encourage literary geniuses to do their best work. Mr. James Douglas momentarily forgot himself in an article in the *Daily Express* (March 5th), in which he admitted that the money incentive has had an opposite effect.

Another book I long to write is a philosophy of literary avarice. It is a base passion which has not been thoroughly explored, even by Balzac or Bennett. The influence of avarice on literature has never been analysed.

Avarice has destroyed more men of genius than drink or indolence. Avarice corrupts the mind. Genius without avarice is as rare as beauty without vanity.

#### WHY THE ARMED FORCES EXIST.

Early in February there were rumours in Eastern Europe of various Governments massing troops for war. One of the rumours said that Poland was mobilising troops on the German frontier in Upper Silesia. This, to the newspapers was a "disturbing" rumour. But re-assurance soon came. The troops were not for the purpose of threatening the German capitalists, but for the purpose of dealing with a strike which was likely to break out. (*News-Chronicle*, February 6th.)

Needless to say the Polish Government was not sending troops to intimidate the employers, but to keep the workers in subjection.

#### TROTSKY'S VIEW OF RUSSIA'S FUTURE.

In an interview given to the *New York Times*, and republished in *The Militant* (New York, March 12th), Trotsky stated his views on the Five-Year Plan and the future of the Socialist movement.

*Question:* Do you believe that the development of the Five-Year Plan has strengthened or weakened the possibility of building socialism in Soviet Russia alone without co-operation along similar lines in the rest of Europe? *Answer:* This raises the question about socialism in a single country. The inevitability of socialism flows historically from the fact that the present productive forces of humanity have become incompatible not only with the private property in the means of production but also with present national boundaries, especially in Europe. Just

as mediæval particularism hindered the development of capitalism in its youth, so now at the peak of its development capitalism is strangling in the limits set by the national States. Socialism cannot confine productive forces in the Procrustean bed of national States. The Socialist economy will develop on the basis of an international division of labour, the mighty foundations of which have been laid down by capitalism. The Soviet industrial construction is, in my view, a part of a future European, Asiatic and world-wide Socialist structure, and not an independent national whole.

*Question:* Will Soviet Russia be compelled to come to some sort of a compromise with Western capitalism, assuming that she may not be able to pursue a Socialist policy single-handed? What form would such a compromise assume? *Answer:* The "compromise" between the Soviet and the capitalist systems is not a question of the future but of the present. It is already a fact to-day, although not a very stable one. How will the interrelations between the isolated Soviet Union and world capitalism develop? Here a concrete prophecy is not easy to make, but in general I should cast the following horoscope: European capitalism is far nearer to a Socialist revolution than the Soviet Union is to a national Socialist society.

Trotsky's recognition of the impossibility of Socialism in Russia in the near future is late but interesting. Mr. H. G. Wells has also discovered at last that the talk of Communism in Russia is "absurd," and that the existing system there is "State Capitalism" (*Daily Telegraph*, February 24th). H.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

#### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

##### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b>	... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m. Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m. Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Monday</b>	... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b>	... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b>	... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b>	... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m. Mossbury Road, Battersea, S.W., 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b>	... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m. Stamford Hill (near Regent's Theatre), 8 p.m. Paragon Road, Hackney, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jasper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLIS.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. at 21, Bridge Street, Homerton, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, 113, Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 24, Ampleforth Grove.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop, Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 15, Percy Road, E.11. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary, E. Boden, 74, Glenalmond Road.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., W. Mays, 99, Oxford Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Sec. W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.16. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enervation of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 28, Russell Rd., Palmers Green, N.13. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## KREUGER: A PRODUCT OF HIS TIME

When enumerating the virtues of the present order of society and the difficulties that bar the road to social change in the direction of common ownership, one of the essential points brought forward by our opponents is the part played by the so-called "captain of industry" to-day. It is urged that production on a large scale is impossible without them, that their energy and enterprise depends upon self-interest which signifies the pursuit of wealth and power, and that such incentives being absent from the proposed new social order captains of industry will not develop and large scale production will therefore languish.

Events constantly make plain the weakness of this position, but its supporters continue their advocacy unabashed, partly from interested motives and partly from the sheer incapacity to see and understand the facts in front of them.

One of the periodical sensational cases has now come up for judgment, which again shatters this great man theory and at the same time lays bare the rottenness at the basis of the present social system and the misery this rottenness causes.

A bright star of big industry, Ivar Kreuger, the "Swedish Match King," shot himself in Paris recently, and when the news was first broadcast the Press united in eulogising him and his achievements; publishing sketches of his life to show how by industry and ability he had built up from a small and insignificant beginning the huge Kreuger organisation that stretched its tentacles across national boundaries, financed governments and brought the whole world into its web. There is no narrow patriotism about big industry, it

only uses this sentiment at times to further its economic aims.

Kreuger's achievement was hailed as a triumph of the principle of "self-help," the beloved child of Samuel Smiles. One striking feature of this case, however, was the withholding of the news of his death for several hours lest it should have an adverse effect upon dealings in Kreuger stocks. Uneasiness was abroad, and the taking of his life by an apparently successful and prosperous business magnate raised doubts about the stability of the concerns he controlled.

That the fears were well-founded was very rapidly proved. Whereas in 1928 the price of Kreuger & Toll "B" shares stood at £56, on April 19th they fell to 1s. 6d. (See *News-Chronicle*, April 20th.) Other shares suffered a similar devastating fall and shareholders' organisations are being formed to see if anything at all can be saved from the ruin of these vast concerns.

The pæans of praise have turned into torrents of wrath and vilification. The change has been brought about by sensational disclosures alleging gigantic frauds of one kind and another in carrying out the schemes of these companies. It is another sad blow for the captains of industry and self-help worshippers, and comes before they have had time to recover from the Hatry frauds. Yet the path of capitalist enterprise has been marked by constantly recurring instances of this kind, and the explanation is simple.

Leaving aside those who set out from a fraudulent beginning, ambitious men, brought up on maxims of wealth and power, set out to build up large enterprises and



use all the capital and credit they can lay their hands on. A business slump, which these optimists rarely foresee, a shortage of available capital, or something similar, interferes with their projects or stands in the way of some greater achievement, and induces them temporarily to resort to methods which come under the legal heading of fraud, in the expectation that they will be able to put matters right when their designs have been accomplished. Sometimes they are successful and live on as highly respected pillars of society, with the probability of a monument after their deaths. Sometimes they are unfortunate, then economic rivals, frightened financiers, maddened shareholders, and the moralists, unite in condemning them and bringing them to "justice."

The larger the concerns involved the larger is the scale of fraud, and, in the event of the fraud being discovered or the promoter of it over-reaching himself, the greater is the confusion and ruin resulting. Thus, when Hatry fell, there was considerable financial confusion, and many went down in the wreck.

Big industry strives to utilise all the funds it can lay hands on for the purpose of expansion and of enriching those at its head. It puts its hand in the pocket of small capitalists, shopkeepers, and the better-paid "professional" men, utilising their savings for its schemes. Consequently, it is the heartbroken cry of the small shareholder that usually makes the most noise when a collapse comes, because it is just these people, with economic security in sight, struggling fiercely to get there, who are being constantly ruined and flung into the more hopeless sections of the propertyless class. And yet they are the fruitful soil for the blooming of all the pernicious doctrines of self-help and the like. Striving for economic freedom, unable to accomplish it by their own efforts, they look hopefully to company promoters, provide funds for all kinds of hare-brained schemes, and sing the praises of "great" men whom they trustfully expect will lift them out of the mud. Like all huggers of narrow, petty ideals, they cannot find words hard enough for those who let them down and shatter their delusions.

Another side to this question of relying upon individuals of alleged great directive ability is also seen when crashes such as

those we are discussing occur. If the main threads of such large concerns are in the hands of one individual, when he is removed no one knows where to turn and a sound undertaking may be wrecked by the confusion involved. When Hatry was convicted he had to be brought back to help sort out the tangle. Kreuger is dead and apparently no one knows what may happen, because no one has a clear knowledge of what strings Kreuger was pulling.

Of late, doubts have even crept into the capitalist's breast, and the wisdom of building up organisations that outstrip the powers of control is being questioned.

The trouble, however, does not lie in the size of the organisation but in the method of control that has to be adopted on account of the private property basis of the organisation.

To-day the duty of the captain of industry is to overreach other captains of industry and collect under him groups of willing tools to aid him in the work of extracting the greatest amount of surplus value from the working class. It is not a question of running an industry but of piling up profits, and the captain sometimes seeks to obtain the lion's share of these profits.

When industry comes to be organised to meet the needs of everybody without distinction, the various tasks necessary will be distributed and controlled on behalf of all. There will be neither opportunity nor incentive for one to achieve power and wealth at the expense of another, and there will be every inducement for each to give of his best in the way that is most congenial for the benefit of himself and the rest of society.

Kreuger, Hatry, and their like, are really only victims of a society that puts wealth and power among the principal virtues.

GILMAC.

### POPLAR TOWN HALL.

In last month's "S.S." a meeting was announced to take place on April 8th. At the last moment it was discovered that, owing to an oversight, the Hall had been let to another organisation for the same day and time, and our meeting could not take place.

We regret the inconvenience caused by this mistake, for which we were not responsible.

## THE CAUSE OF THE CRISIS.

(Previous articles appeared in November and January.)

In the two preceding articles it was shown that the fundamental cause of the crisis is not to be found in the defects of the world's monetary systems, and that the collapse of the gold standard, in this and other countries, was not responsible for the chapter of accidents but merely one of the features of the economic collapse. The real cause of that collapse has now to be determined. In discussing the depression in which the trade of the world has been floundering since the end of 1929, it is usual to relate the sequence of dismal events since then to the sharp break in general gold prices that occurred at that date. Thus Sir Henry Strakosch, in a Memorandum on the Crisis (Supplement to the *Economist*, January 9th, 1932) writes that, "To-day it is difficult to imagine that, even among the uninstructed, there is anyone who does not regard the fall of commodity prices as the root cause of the present crisis." A discussion of the cause of the crisis can therefore fairly take as its starting point the sharp fall in prices that has occurred during the last eighteen months.

The answer to the question, "Why did prices collapse in 1929?" contains the explanation of the causes of the crisis. It can be affirmed straight away that such factors as reparations and war debts, tariffs, maldistribution of gold, failure on the part of creditor countries to lend unlimited amounts to debtor countries, etc., were not the cause of the fall in prices, although they may have helped to intensify the decline. The price structure crumbled in 1929 because then a number of factors, such as those just mentioned, combined to reveal the unsound position that had been built up in the preceding years.

After the break that occurred in 1921, the general level of gold prices remained comparatively steady up to 1929, although there was a slight downward tendency from 1925. This steadiness in the general price level is of importance, because it occurred at a time when production of all commodities was expanding rapidly. The expansion was due to a variety of causes. In industrial production the extension of capital equipment, the simplification of processes, new inventions

affecting technique, rationalisation, etc., were characteristic of the period preceding 1929. The truth of this statement is so obvious and well known that it is hardly necessary to elaborate the point. Nevertheless, it is perhaps worth while to refer to the following statements taken from the Commerce Year Book for 1930 (U.S. Department of Commerce). While they only relate to American conditions, they are indicative of world trends:—

For 1929 the index (of industrial production) stood 18 per cent. above the average for the base period from which it is computed (1923-1925). . . . On account of the increasing efficiency of manufacturing industry, resulting in greater output per man employed, the number of workers in factory industries has shown no such upward movement during post-War years as is shown in the production statistics. There was, in fact, some decrease in the number between 1923 and 1927, the latest year for which complete census data are available. . . . In the factories each wage earner on the average is aided by engines and other prime movers of a capacity of 4.7 horse power: in 1899 the average was 2.1.

In all branches of mining the opening of new areas, for example, the new copper fields in Central Africa, estimated to be capable of satisfying, by themselves, the whole world's requirements (see *Manchester Guardian Commercial*, March 7th, 1929), and new methods such as those that have permitted gold to be mined at greater depths and that raised the percentage of refined petroleum recoverable from crude oil from 26.8 per cent. in 1920 to 44 per cent. in 1929, added to productive capacity.

The same tendency manifested itself in agriculture. As an example wheat can be taken. The production of wheat (excluding Russia and China), which was about 368 million quarters a year before the War and averaged 391 million quarters in the four years immediately after the War, rose to 480 million quarters in the bumper crop year of 1928, and averaged 447 million quarters for the four year period 1927-30. For all practical purposes it can be taken that the increase in production has been accompanied by a nearly equivalent increase in acreage, although notable increases in the yield per acre have occurred in some areas. The higher yields in these parts, however, have been offset by the low yields in some of the newer areas, where production has not yet been fully developed. The increase in acreage is attributable to the expansion that took place during the War, when belligerent



Governments were prepared to pay high prices for foodstuffs for their armies, and to biological and mechanical discoveries. For instance, Canadian acreage is now two-and-a-half times what it was before the War. The introduction of the Marquis variety of wheat alone permitted the cultivation of areas which had formerly been unsuitable, for climatic reasons, for wheat. It was stated in the Report of the Imperial Economic Committee on Wheat (1931) that, "The striking result of these biological developments has been to extend very greatly the area within which wheat can be grown. By sowing these newer types, wheat is now cultivated fifty to a hundred miles further north than was possible ten years ago" (page 29). In the same report the opinion is expressed that "the most significant change (in wheat cultivation during the post-War period) has been the rapid increase in the application of mechanical aids to the farm in the principal wheat producing and exporting countries." Later the following facts are quoted to show the extent to which mechanisation has proceeded:

In the United States in 1916 only some 30,000 tractors were manufactured. In 1928 it is estimated that some 850,000 were in use. In 1914 the total number (of combined Harvester-Threshers) manufactured in the United States was 270; ten years later, in 1924, it was 5,828; two years later, in 1926, it had more than doubled to 11,760; in another two years, in 1928, it had again doubled to 25,392; and in the next year, in 1929, it had increased once more by very nearly 50 per cent. to 36,957. . . . In regard to Australia the "combine" or its equivalent is now "universally used"; other harvesting machines, including the "stripper thresher" and the "header harvester" are also widely used. . . . In Argentina over 30 per cent. of the total wheat area is now harvested by means of the "combine."

Before proceeding with the main argument it is interesting to look for a moment at some of the effects of this mechanisation. Four of these are of particular importance. These are the reduction in production costs, the reduced demand for farm labour, the "decasualisation" of harvest labour, and the decline in the number of horses used in farming, which has meant a decrease in the acreage required to provide their food. On these points the Report, already referred to, makes, together with many others, the following statements:—

A combined harvester-thresher usually harvests and threshes wheat at a cost of from 3 to 5 cents a bushel while the cost of threshing alone, when the header or binder is used, usually amounts to more than 10 cents per bushel. . . . The total

working cost of harvesting per acre with different types of machinery is:—

10-foot combine	1.47 dollars per acre
12-foot header	3.56 dollars per acre
7-foot binder	4.22 dollars per acre

Canadian official estimates (of costs) show a reduction from 17 cents to 9½ cents per bushel harvested. Figures from Argentina also show a similar result. . . .

In 1928 the largest Canadian crop ever recorded was estimated to have been harvested by 16,500 fewer men than would have been necessary if some 4,000 combines had not been in operation. In 1929 the considerably smaller crop was harvested with the aid of some 7,500 combines without a single harvest excursion being run from Eastern Canada. It is now considered that the day of the harvest excursion is over. . . . In the United States for agriculture as a whole the output per agricultural worker during the decade following the war is estimated to have increased on an average 25 per cent.—during which time, however, more than three million people left the land.

Mechanisation in harvesting has "decasualised" harvest labour where casual labour has been employed; it has smoothed the traditional peak in the labour curve and has thereby greatly reduced labour costs. . . . Next to harvest, the time of severest strain on the labour staff is at ploughing and sowing. Here again mechanisation is producing a fundamental change. It is stated that in the United States one person with a large tractor-drawn drill can sow from 70 to 80 acres a day, while one man using a 50 h.p. tractor can plough as much as 18 acres a day. According to the United States Secretary for Agriculture it is possible, when conditions are suitable, to farm as much as 1,600 acres per day, by using improved cultivators instead of ploughs.

Technical advances in the methods of wheat production of (these) magnitudes carry with them the implication of a continuous tendency towards over-production, of continuous pressure of wheat on the world's markets, as an inevitable accompaniment of the spread of the new technique. The extension of the use of the tractor on the farm and of the motor on the farm and in the towns has led to a reduction of the number of horses, and therefore to a decline in the acreage required to provide their food. . . . Between 1918 and 1928 the arable land thus released in the United States amounted to not less than 18 million acres.

After this digression we can return to the point, already made, that the period preceding the crash was one of great increase in capacity over the whole field of production. Although consumption of nearly all commodities was expanding, it was not keeping pace with the increase in productive capacity. This disequilibrium, however, was masked in some industries by the shutting down of excess capacity. In others where it was found to be impossible to apply this method and stocks accumulated, recourse was had to schemes of artificial price control. In a memorandum (Stocks of Staple

Commodities) published by the Royal Economic Society in October, 1930, it was stated, "When all factors are weighed together—production, consumption and prices—it is now quite clear that there was a definite lack of equilibrium in tin, rubber, sugar, coffee and petroleum: with copper lead, spelter, nitrate and cotton conditions were somewhat less out of line. . . .

Conditions of free production and marketing existed last summer only in cotton, tin, rubber and tea out of the twelve commodities (cotton, copper, tin, lead, spelter, rubber, sugar, tea, coffee, petroleum, nitrate)." This memorandum dealt with only twelve commodities, but the list of articles subject to artificial control, of one kind or another, could be extended indefinitely and would include finished products as well as raw materials. Now schemes of artificial control, if they are to enjoy even a temporary success, require financing. A large volume of credit was in fact utilised for the purpose of maintaining, and in some instances raising, the prices of commodities. A few instances must suffice. Between 1925 and 1928 the world's production of coffee doubled, mainly as a consequence of an immense increase in Brazilian production due to better methods of cultivation, a greater use of fertilizers and an extension of planting. During the same period consumption rose by only about 10 per cent. As a consequence world stocks rose to an amount nearly equal to a year's consumption (to-day stocks are nearly 30 months' consumption). Despite this manifest disequilibrium, the price of coffee did not decline, as Brazil stored the excess supply and so kept it off the market. This she was only able to do because of the large amounts borrowed abroad both for long and short periods. In 1927-28, for example, £13½ million was borrowed in London for the acknowledged purpose of financing coffee. When finally prices crashed in 1929 a further £17 million was borrowed in order to prevent a complete disaster for the Brazilian producers and those who had provided the previous loans. (On this, see Studies in the Artificial Control of Raw Material Supplies, No. 3, by J. W. F. Rowe: Royal Economic Society.)

The position in wheat was very similar. Apart from direct Government assistance to producers in Europe through tariffs, quotas, etc., the formation of the Federal Farm

Board in U.S.A. in 1929 and the action of the Canadian and Australian "pools" in keeping supplies off the market were directed to maintaining prices, unjustified by the relationship between supply and demand. At the end of the 1931 crop year the Federal Farm Board was holding 265 million bushels of wheat which it had taken off the market, and it had also made loans to wheat co-operatives. Funds for these operations were obtained from the Treasury. "The increase of holdings (of wheat) in the U.S.A. was largely the result of official efforts to support prices by means of loans to growers and actual buying and hoarding by the Government. The larger Canadian stocks were mainly furnished by the big crop of 1928, which the Wheat Growers' Pool refused to sell at competitive prices. There is no doubt that the action of the Pool in this matter received Government approval, and, eventually, Canadian Provincial Governments guaranteed the loans which banks had made to finance the wheat." (The World's Staples: Wheat, by G. J. S. Broomhall, published in the Index, April, 1931, the official organ of the Svenska Handelsbanken, Stockholm.) Instances of the dependence of price stability on restriction of supply, itself dependent on the provision of finance by banks, governments or other lenders, could be multiplied indefinitely. These two, however, will suffice to show what a crazy structure had been built up prior to 1929, and how it was inevitable that the whole edifice would crash if anything occurred to restrict the supply of credit available for the holding up of supplies. When the time came there was no lack of factors capable of toppling everything over. The crash in Wall Street in October, 1929, which led from stock liquidation to forced selling of commodities, and to the calling in of loans by banks and a cessation of new lending, ushered in the deluge; but in any event the game could not have been played much longer. With the increasing disequilibrium between production and consumption of all kinds of commodities, it was inevitable that sooner or later it would become impossible to obtain finance for the stock accumulated, or to enable a sufficiently large capacity to be shut down.

We have now got so far behind the fall in prices as to be able to trace it to the persistent disequilibrium between production and consumption that resulted from the increase in the world's productive capacity.



This has already been affirmed in several quarters. Thus Prof. Bonn writes:—

The crisis was ultimately due to the misuse of capital. The savings which productive surplus had yielded, or was expected to yield, had been spent in the construction of new productive plants of constantly increasing capacity in the hope that the consumers on whose behalf this vast apparatus was to operate would grow up automatically.

To pass from this stage to the statement that the crisis was the result of over-production is not to solve the problem, but merely to restate it. The question at once arises, "Why was there over-production?"

In the first place it is clear that over-production, in the absolute sense, never has existed and is hardly likely to exist. At no stage in history, and certainly at no time in recent years, has the supply of goods and services been more than sufficient to satisfy the needs of the people of the world. No one would venture to assert that there is, or has been, over-production relative to needs in view of the fact that in this country alone, even during the years of prosperity, unemployment for no length of time fell below a million. To-day world unemployment is over twenty million, and it is estimated that, including dependents, "over 40,000,000 persons are now living below the minimum standard of health" in America alone (*Manchester Guardian*, March 17th, 1932). But there is still over-production. It is patent that the term can only have a relative application. By over-production is meant production in excess of the demands of purchasers. This leads back to the purpose of production to-day. Under capitalism, with the means of production privately owned and controlled, the purpose of production is the sale of goods at a profit. The making of profits is the aim and object of all production, not the supplying of wants, although of course a producer, having to sell his goods before he can realise his profit, will endeavour to produce commodities that satisfy a want. Not only is production organised for sale at a profit, but it is carried on by the exploitation of legally free workers, working for wages. The consumption of the workers is limited to the amount they receive in wages. This is only a part of the amount produced by their labour, as otherwise there would be no surplus available to constitute the profits of the capitalists. Out of the profits the capitalist takes the amount required for his personal needs. The rest is re-invested in further means of

production. Thus fresh means of production are constantly being provided that turn out goods far in excess of the effective demand for them. This is the inherent contradiction in the capitalist method of production which cannot be overcome while that method prevails. As at this moment there must always be a piling up of commodities for which profitable markets cannot be found, owing to the workers being denied access to the product of their labour. And when such accumulations occur, the only way out of the difficulty under Capitalism, short of a destruction of stocks, is an economic crisis, which by causing a slowing up of future production will allow stocks to be reduced, and so prepare the way for another burst of prosperity, which in turn will dissolve into a crisis. This painful corrective of the defects of Capitalism means for the workers unemployment, reduced standards of living, in many instances starvation, acute want and misery. And while Capitalism endures this must always be their lot. Only when, by using their votes to gain political power, they abolish the capitalistic system, and substitute for its anarchy a system of production based, not on profit-making, but on the satisfaction of needs will they benefit materially instead of suffering from man's increased powers of production. Only then will economic crises cease to occur.

B. S.

#### ISLINGTON.

Members and sympathisers in Islington are asked to notice that the Branch now meets in Room I, Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road (about eight doors from Hornsey Road and four minutes from the Nag's Head).

Meetings are held each Wednesday, at 8 p.m. Non-members are welcome.

#### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

### SOCIALISTS AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

At least two members of the I.L.P., Mr. J. Maxton, M.P., and Mr. G. Buchanan, M.P., have said quite clearly that Socialists ought not to be inside the Labour Party; and that they intend to get out of it.

Mr. Maxton wrote an article, "Why Socialists should be outside the Labour Party," published in the *New Leader* (February 12th, 1932). In it he took up and answered a point made by Mr. E. F. Wise in favour of remaining in the Labour Party. Referring to Wise, Mr. Maxton wrote:—

He says, further: "Surely he (Maxton) agrees that the unprecedented opportunity of the present economic breakdown should be used in a strong effort for bringing about Socialism in Our Time, and not wasted in the barren bitterness of internecine warfare inside the Movement." I do agree with that proposition. That is why I intend to be outside the Labour Party, where I can carry on my work for Socialism among the working people of this land without the harassing pre-occupation of having to fight the leaders of the Labour Party for permission to do it.

Mr. Wise had also used an argument that Maxton has himself used against the S.P.G.B., viz., that Socialists ought to be inside the Labour Party to influence it from within. Maxton gives this answer:—

If pressure from within is the ideal method, then get within the body that contains the biggest battalions, and that at the present juncture is the National Government. I believe the reasoning to be profoundly wrong. Socialists should be inside a Socialist organisation, and their associations with other bodies should never be such as to limit or hamper their Socialist activities.

Mr. G. Buchanan, M.P., spoke at the Scottish I.L.P. Conference (reported in *Forward*) in support of a motion to disaffiliate from the Labour Party:—

Mr. George Buchanan, M.P. (Hutchesontown), supporting the motion, said that the Conference had two issues to face: the present position of the I.L.P., and the position of the Labour Party. If a working-class party was a party that defended the workers in time of need, then he could show that the Labour Party was not a working-class party. Not only had it failed to defend them, but it had actually attacked them. Their record was transparent. Johnston had attacked the defenceless servant lassies, Lansbury had come out in favour of the Means Test, and had endorsed the Indian policy of the Government. Disaffiliation might mean disaster for the I.L.P., but what would be the victory of the other side? They might get the millions, but their success would be a mockery and a sham. He had decided to take the other road. Decide as they might, he would be prepared to leave Parliament to-morrow. H

had a greater love than the I.L.P. He was taking the choice of the rags and hovels of his native area. (*Forward*, Jan. 30th, 1932.)

It now remains to be seen whether Messrs. Maxton and Buchanan will keep their word, or whether, for reasons which Mr. Maxton says are "profoundly wrong," they will find it expedient to remain in the Party which is "not a working class party."

\* \* \*

Since the above was written we learn that the I.L.P. has asked the Labour Party to allow representatives of the two organisations to meet to settle their differences, with the object of the I.L.P. remaining inside the Labour Party. Our readers will perceive how difficult it is to keep up with the kaleidoscopic changes of policy of the I.L.P. and its leaders.

P.S.

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#### LUTON AND DISTRICT.

Members and sympathisers in this area, willing to co-operate in forming a Branch, are asked to communicate with S. Harris, at 64, Luton Road, Dunstable.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Australia at Box 1440, P.O., Elizabeth St., Melbourne.

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#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.

Readers in New Zealand are asked to communicate with the S.P.N.Z. at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland. The S.P.N.Z. are our agents and the *Socialist Standard* can be obtained at the above address.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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**The Socialist Standard**

MAY,



1932

**STATE CONTROL  
OF THE BANKS****LORD BEAVERBROOK STEALS SOME  
THUNDER**

It is the fate of the Labour reformists always to have their reform demands stolen by the openly capitalist parties as soon as the work of popularisation has been carried sufficiently far to give the demands an election value. A particularly cruel theft has just been perpetrated at the expense of the I.L.P. by Lord Beaverbrook, who is a Conservative.

At the last election the workers showed emphatically that they did not like the Labour Party-I.L.P. programme. This chilling experience caused the I.L.P. to polish up its old reforms and look round for some new and more attractive ones. One of the old demands that appeared to contain promise of being a good vote-catcher was the nationalisation of the banks. But hardly had the I.L.P. published the Report of its "Finance Policy Committee," recommending a scheme of state control for banking and credit, than Lord Beaverbrook snatched it up.

These are the two proposals for a state bank.

**The I.L.P.:-**

A central bank supervising the issue of credit and currency, international exchange operations, and government income and expenditure.

A unified banking system, with branches throughout the country, for the local financing of industry and commerce. (*New Leader*, March 25th.)

**Lord Beaverbrook:-**

Send the Bank of England about its business! Let it continue to perform the functions of a joint-stock bank. Establish a Central Bank, owned by the nation, equipped with all the powers necessary to provide abundant credit and hedged about by all the restrictions required to safeguard the permanence and stability of the structure. (*Sunday Express*, April 17th, 1932.)

Lord Beaverbrook's article was headed "Don't Reduce Wages!" and in it he appealed to the workers to rally round the demand for nationalised banking as the way to prevent wage reductions.

The idea that the workers' troubles can be solved and the contradictions of capitalism overcome by state control of the banks is shown by the experience of other countries to be false. The *Labour Magazine* (published by the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party) published a survey of the world's banking systems and demonstrated that in all but two countries either state ownership or a large measure of state control is already applied to the central banking institutions.

The writer in the *Labour Magazine* (February, 1929) said:-

Apart from the Bank of England there is only one other Central Bank of any importance, the constitution of which does not reflect in greater or less degree the principle of national control. That one case is the German Reichsbank, which is outside the control of the Government. . . .

America, the paragon of the individualists, adopted the Labour principle of national control when she reorganised the whole of her banking system in 1914. The Federal Reserve Board at Washington, the American equivalent of the Bank of England, consists of eight members. The Secretary of the Treasury, and the Comptroller of the Currency are members ex-officio. The other six members are appointed by the President of the U.S.A. with the approval of the Senate.

Among the countries with a state bank or state controlled bank, the following were mentioned: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

May we ask the Labour Party, the I.L.P., and Lord Beaverbrook, in which of these countries the state control of banking has provided immunity from the world crisis and protected the workers against the usual evil effects of capitalism?

**SOCIALISM AND INDUSTRIAL  
ORGANISATION.**

A reader asks: "What is the attitude of the S.P.G.B. to the industrial organisations of the workers. All the other parties claiming to represent the interests of the workers have always had some policy in this matter. The S.P.G.B. appears to lack one. The I.L.P. support the Trade Unions, the Communists back the Minority Movement, the S.L.P. advocated Industrial Unionism, and the B.S.P. favoured certain forms of syndicalism. Where does the S.P.G.B. stand?"

Towards the end of last century the work that had been done in placing the workers' slave position in a clearer light and inducing them to organise on this basis was diverted by trade-union leaders into narrow trade-union channels, and the political parties that arose, such as the S.D.F. and I.L.P. felt compelled to pander to this side in order to attract membership.

When the Industrial Unionist movement first came into existence its appeal on the surface appeared to be so strong that the established parties anticipated that it would sweep the board. Consequently they modified their policy to prevent the feared landslide in membership and to attract more members by appealing directly on the ground of helping the workers in their immediate demands.

The ideas of syndicalists are a survival from conditions in the early days of the capitalist system before improved means of transport and communication and the extension of the franchise had made it possible for a class organisation of the workers to be established. Such ideas arose in countries where capitalism was still immature and where the ranks of the factory workers were still being recruited from among the small producers, i.e., peasants and handicraftsmen. These people carry their old ideas of property relations with them into the new conditions of life. They were accustomed to owning their instruments of production, small plots of land, small workshops and simple tools, either as individuals or as small groups, and when brought into contact with capitalist exploitation they readily adopted the idea that the factory should belong to the group working in it.

At the same time the State appears to these people as a power apart which must

be overthrown, but which they cannot hope to control.

In England the developments of international commercial and financial relations have long ago shown such ideas to be obsolete. The mass of the workers have accepted the notion that they cannot do without capital, and that, therefore, the workers in any particular factory are dependent (through the capitalists) upon the rest of the workers in capitalist society. The wage contract hides from them the fact that the capitalists are a parasitical class.

The struggle between the industrial workers and their employers takes, therefore, the form of collective bargaining which requires organisation of a wider scope than that of a factory group. Hence we have Trade Unions accepting the capitalist system of production and trying to obtain for their members the full market price of their labour-power. Socialists organised in the S.P.G.B. recognise that these efforts are necessary under capitalism, but we also recognise that the establishment of adult suffrage provided the workers with a weapon with which they can end capitalism. We regard Trade Unions as insufficient in any case and, in so far as they are composed of non-Socialists, their actions are frequently found to be reactionary, both upon the industrial and the political fields. We do not, however, regard this as a reason for advocating and supporting policies which prove upon examination to be even more reactionary.

Policies which encourage the workers in different industries to entertain the idea that they have interests distinct from those of other sections of the workers, or that incite them to attempt to defy the forces of the State, only result in the weakening of their existing organisations and delay the time when they will organise as a class. Actual history demonstrates that the Trade Unions are superior to alleged alternative forms of organisation as a means of dealing with capitalist conditions, and that in spite of their weaknesses the former survive where the latter are either absorbed or entirely disappear.

Our critic mentions the S.L.P. Its attempts to found an industrial union in this country were a complete failure, and the same may be said of the syndicalist movement with which certain members of the B.S.P., such as Tom Mann, were associated. Towards the latter end of the War,



however, leaders of these bodies acquired temporary prominence through their association with the shop stewards and factory committees movement. The comb-out for military needs placed a premium upon skilled workers, and as the employing concerns were making abnormal profits, minor concessions were made to keep the industries working smoothly. An illusory "Workers' control" became the slogan of the day, misleading many into believing that their emancipation was at hand.

The termination of the War reversed these conditions. The return of millions of workers from the army coupled with the shutting down of munition works and other sources of military supplies, weighted the scale more heavily in favour of the employers in relation to their employees. Leaders of factory committees became leaders of the unemployed, and began to turn their attention from specifically industrial matters to political agitation.

The S.L.P. and B.S.P. went to pieces, and from the confusion arose the Communist Party. The tactics of this body have varied from support of men like A. J. Cook in 1926 (with his policy of nationalisation) to the support of breakaway leaders, such as Allan, of the United Mineworkers of Scotland. Futility has invariably been the outcome and the leaders of the Minority Movement have frequently confessed their failure. (See *Daily Worker*, Jan. 25th.)

It is instructive to turn to the history of similar movements in other countries. In his "Works Councils in Germany," Mr. C. W. Guillebaud gives an interesting and detailed account of post-war industrial movements in that country. While the end of hostilities produced somewhat similar results there as in Britain, there was a difference which became more marked as time went on. The German industrial capitalists had to turn from the supply of war materials to the indemnifying of the Allied Powers, which involved a considerable maintenance of production. It was deemed expedient, therefore, to give to the factory committees or works councils a definite legal standing, which, combined with other minor concessions, secured what the masters wanted, i.e., a certain measure of industrial peace. As the author puts it:—

In 1922 and, indeed, throughout the first four years after the War the councils were often able to extract concessions from the employers by virtue of their bargaining strength and that of

organised labour in general. Prices were rising continuously, trade was brisk, and while a strike meant a considerable sacrifice of profits the inflationary process lessened the importance of elements of cost which would have bulked much larger in the eyes of the employers in a period of industrial depression. (pp. 97-8.)

The boom collapsed towards the end of 1923. The number of those in receipt of unemployment benefit rose from a quarter of a million in September to a million and-a-half in February, 1924 (p. 108). The effect of this upon the position of the workers can be readily guessed.

(It) placed the employers in a position of unqualified strength within the factory and business undertaking. The Works Councils found themselves forced to remain strictly on the defensive, and became, in fact, more concerned with the question whether they themselves would join the unemployed and have to subsist on the mere pittance given in the form of unemployment benefit, than with the stalwart upholding of their rights and privileges. (pp. 109, 110.)

Thus the factory committees came up against the same economic forces which placed severe limits upon the activities of trades unions. So far from supplanting these bodies, the works councils were absorbed by degrees in the general movement.

Still more striking is the evidence provided by Mr. Maurice Dobb concerning the fate of the factory committee movement in Russia. Describing the situation during the few months prior to the Bolshevik seizure of power, he says:—

Already under Kerensky factory committees had been given certain powers, and in some cases had assumed or tried to assume more powers than they were actually given so that the industrialists were loudly clamouring for the suppression of the committees within reasonable bounds and the restoration of workshop discipline. Cases of actual seizure of factories were not unknown, though still exceptional; but quite considerable interference with the management was more general and seems to have been prompted in most cases by the desire of the workers to prevent the closing down of the work and their own dismissal. (*Russian Economic Developments*, p. 35.)

For tactical reasons the Bolsheviks supported this movement, but their assumption of power in 1917 led to a conflict between them and the factory committees, in which the latter eventually got the worst of it. As Dobb puts it:—

After the taking of the political key positions in October, the question of factory committees and workers' control was still regarded from a tactical standpoint. . . . Industry still remained predominantly under the command of the capitalist, and an extensive system of workers' control, backed by the political influence of the new Bolshevik State, was regarded as the best way

of ensuring that the continued rule of the capitalist in the industrial sphere should be no more than that of a limited monarch. (p. 38.)

The Bolsheviks were in no position to dispossess the capitalists entirely and establish Socialism. Hence they soon found themselves under the necessity of supporting them against the factory committees.

What the new government principally feared was that the owners of the factories would bring pressure to bear by closing the factories and locking out the workers. These fears considerably influenced the Decree on Workers' Control of November 14th, 1917.

Whilst this gave the committees the right to inspect accounts and maintain discipline, Article 7 reserved to the proprietor the sole executive right of giving orders as to the running of the concern, and expressly forbade the factory committees to interfere. (p. 39.)

The development of the civil war made centralised control of immediate importance to the new State. Thus we read that:—

In cases of essential industries Vesenha (Supreme Economic Council) elaborated plans of organisation and itself sent officials from the centre to cajole or override the factory committees, conciliate the technical staffs and start production again upon some more satisfactory basis. At the same time the anarchism of the factory committees themselves was curbed by merging them with the trades unions. . . . Trade union influence could now be exercised to secure a uniform policy and observance of government orders and decrees on the part of the factory committees. (p. 46.)

So that in the very country where it reached the peak of its development, the movement for "workers' control" eventually became merely a means for securing the survival and smoother running of capitalism. The productive forces cannot be permanently fettered anywhere by such utopian and reactionary conceptions.

Only the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production can emancipate the workers from capitalist control. The establishment of society upon this basis can be accomplished only by the conscious political action of the workers as a class. Workers who grasp these facts are not to be hypnotised by claims made on behalf of any so-called "revolutionary" industrial organisation.

E. B.

#### ORDERS FOR LITERATURE.

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#### FREE TRADE AND PROTECTION

We are witnessing England, which has been a so-called "Free Trade" country for more than 80 years, turning over to Protection. An examination of these two policies from the worker's point of view is necessary in order to make clear what attitude the working class should adopt towards the question.

Free Trade does not necessarily mean that duties are not levied on imported goods but that any duties levied should be for the purpose of raising revenue, and be balanced by excise duties on similar goods produced within the country. Protection means the imposition of duties on imports for the protection of home industries, or on exports to protect the consumers from the export of commodities they may desire to purchase.

History provides a typical instance of protection in the Corn Laws, which were in operation in England for nearly three centuries. Their alleged object was to encourage the home farmers by protecting them against lowered prices, which were due either to a good season or to the import of foreign corn. Accordingly, in 1660, the export of wheat was only allowed when the price was below 40s. a quarter, and small duties were imposed on foreign wheat. Three years later the price below which wheat could be imported was raised to 48s. and the import duty was increased. Later the import of wheat was prohibited when there was an abundance in the home market. The Government of 1688 even went so far as to pass a Bounty Act granting a bounty on the export of corn when there was an abundance, in order to keep corn scarce in England and to maintain a good price. These protective measures fostered agriculture in England; and competition among the farmers prevented the price of corn soaring too high.

England at this time, and during the first three-quarters of the 18th century, was mainly agricultural. But a rapid change took place—an industrial revolution, which took definite shape from about 1760 and was completed by about 1830. A series of inventions began to substitute machinery for hand labour. Kay's flying shuttle, Hargreave's spinning jenny, Arkwright's water-frame, Cartwright's power-loom, were inventions which, among others, outstripped the craftsman's tools and forced the craftsman into the factory. This change trans-



formed England into a manufacturing country, and brought forward a new propertied section, the factory owners—or industrial capitalists. It also produced the modern working class, a class composed of those who were dependent solely on the sale of their labour-power in order to live. Previous to this, propertyless workers formed only a small part of the population.

The new industrial capitalists were seriously hampered by the system of protection. For over three centuries tariffs had been placed upon foreign imports with the object of helping home industries, bringing in taxes, and attempting to maintain a "favourable balance of trade." The tariffs and restrictions were irksome to these new industrial capitalists and opposed to their interests. They wanted cheap raw material and cheap food for their workers in order to be able to drive down wages. They therefore opposed tariffs which, it was argued, made food dear. Hence the rise of Free Trade organisations and the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws.

In 1820 the merchants of London sent a petition to Parliament praying that every restriction upon trade not imposed on account of revenue should be abolished; a similar petition was sent from the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce. A Parliamentary committee investigated the claims of the petitioners and reported in favour of Free Trade. During the third quarter of the 18th century there were hundreds of Acts imposing duties on almost every commodity. Peel had reduced these to just over 400, thus preparing the way for future reforms which culminated in the repeal of the Corn Laws.

Before dealing with the repeal of the Corn Laws some mention of the Parliamentary Reform Act would be to the point.

For over three centuries the House of Commons had been made up of two representatives from each county and two from certain towns. But as a result of industrial development some great towns had arisen which were not represented in Parliament. The House of Commons was, therefore, an inadequately representative body; in fact, only approximately one hundred thousand people were represented out of a population of fourteen millions. The Reform struggle which arose out of the need of the new capitalists for some measure of political control culminated in the Reform Act of 1832. This Act extended the franchise to

about a half-a-million large and small property holders. The workers were drawn into the struggle by the promise that its success would mean the repeal of the Corn Laws, the lowering of the price of bread, and a consequent increase in the purchasing power of their wages. Political power had previously been held by the Tory landowners and Whig merchants. The Reform Act broke their power and admitted the industrial capitalists to a share in the making of the laws. The repeal of the Corn Laws fourteen years later was one of the results of Parliamentary reform. In the year following the repeal there was a crisis, which, in the words of Marx, brought "a general reduction of wages in honour of the big loaf." In short, the lowering of prices which resulted from the abolition of the Corn Laws was cancelled by an approximate corresponding decrease in wages. The advantage gained by the worker was nil. The advantage gained by the capitalist was lower wages.

It is sometimes argued that a tax placed upon or taken away from those commodities which the worker consumes, cause a rise or fall in their prices and that, therefore, the worker stands to lose or gain. This view is false. The worker owns nothing but his labour-power which he must sell for a wage, i.e., its price. This labour-power is bought and sold in the market and, like all other commodities, its value is determined by the amount of labour-time necessary for its production. Its price fluctuates around its value according to supply and demand. The wage the worker receives, therefore, is determined primarily by the cost of food, clothing and shelter required to produce his labour-power, according to the standard of living prevailing. If the prices of these articles are raised by taxes, then wages will be—on an average—higher to the extent of the taxes. The workers' wages are based upon the market prices of certain commodities. If rates and taxes are reduced, and if (which is not necessarily the case) the prices of commodities fall in consequence of the reduction, wages will tend to be forced to a lower level. If an increase in rates and taxes leads to an increase in the price of commodities, the increase in prices will induce the workers to press for higher wages, and induce the employers to yield in order that their efficiency as workers may not be impaired and output reduced.

The working class produce all the wealth

but receive in return only the price of the labour-power, leaving a "surplus" in the shape of rent, interest, profit, etc. Not all this surplus is retained by the capitalist class; a portion is paid away as rates and taxes to administer capitalism, that is, to enable the Government and local authorities to do for the capitalists collectively what they cannot do for themselves individually. All quarrels over rates and taxes and tariffs are ultimately quarrels between rival sections of the capitalist class as to who shall bear the greatest share of the burden. Whatever the outcome of these quarrels, the workers' position remains untouched.

E. C.

### WHO ARE THE INVENTORS?

#### HOW THE CAPITALISTS "SAVE."

Dear Sir,—The words "The Working Class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced," appear monthly in your interesting little paper THE SOCIALIST STANDARD. But are they true? Let 100 working men collect in a primæval forest, and let it be given to them, by the previous owner; or say, an island. What will happen? They will promptly starve though owning the land, and the forest-trees, and the coal deep down below the trees; and so on and on! Work? Yes, but they need tools, which must be (a) invented, as saws and drills and explosives and spades; and (b) food to go on with, for six months, till they can build houses and sow corn, and reap it.

(a) Inventions by trained scientists are needful, and (b) saved money (saved by someone) to buy tools and food ere the corn can be ripe; or saved food to exchange for tools; and saved bricks, with which to build houses. Marx ignores (a) the inventors and (b) savers—called capitalists—as far as I have read his bulky volume "Das Capital."

Yours, etc.,

GILBERT T. SADLER, M.A., LL.B.

#### Reply.

Before going to the real problem raised by Mr. Sadler, it is worth while pointing out the weakness and inaccuracy of his illustration. Under the primitive conditions he asks us to consider, the forest would not belong to a private owner, and there would not be individuals of differentiated classes to give or to receive it. Further, it is useless to consider modern industrial workers placed in a strange and primitive environment if what we really want to know is what happens in the quite different environment provided by up-to-date capitalism. It is true that 100 industrial workers placed in a primæval forest would probably starve to death unless edible fruits and roots were available, but so would a 100 Edisons, a 100 railway shareholders or 100 company promoters, and so would any collection of

civilised individuals placed in such a position without tools or supplies. The presence of inventors would avail them nothing, since inventors, like other people, cannot go without food for six months.

If, instead of this, we take a reasonable illustration—that of primitive man in the environment with which he was familiar, we find that he did live without capitalists or trained scientists, and with only the most primitive tools. We know of no evidence that the earliest improvements in the methods of production were outstanding inventions by individual inventive geniuses. If they were, we would expect to see primitive races in historical times advancing rapidly through the activities of similar inventors within their own ranks. On this point, Mr. Walter Libby, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of the History of Science in the Carnegie Institute of Technology, says:—

In fact, as we approach the consideration of prehistoric times it becomes difficult to distinguish inventions from the slow results of development—in metallurgy, tool-making, building, pottery, war-gear, weaving, cooking, the domestication of animals, the selection and cultivation of plants. (*Introduction to the History of Science*. Pub. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1918, p. 232.)

In short, the set of circumstances Mr. Sadler asks us to consider, never existed except in his imagination. So let us leave his mythical example and examine the world we live in to-day, bearing in mind that the passage he quotes from our "Declaration of Principles" does not refer to primitive man but is taken from a paragraph beginning, "That society as at present constituted, etc." (See back page.)

In passing, we may notice that inventions in our own day are dependent on the general level of knowledge and progress, as they were in primitive times. The inventor has to be educated and must work with the material provided by the society he lives in. He must learn from others, including other inventors. The idea of an isolated invention alone revolutionising industry is quite untrue to facts. In 1857 it was stated that the spinning machinery then in use was a compound of about 800 separate inventions. (See *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, by J. A. Hobson. P. 79.)

Herbert Spencer dealt with this question in his *Study of Sociology*. He says:—

Even were we to grant the absurd supposition that the genesis of the great man does not depend on the antecedents furnished by the society he is



born in, there would still be the quite sufficient facts that he is powerless in the absence of the material and mental accumulations which his society inherits from the past and that he is powerless in the absence of the co-existing population, character, intelligence, and social arrangements. . . . Suppose a Watt, with all his inventive power, living in a tribe ignorant of iron, or in a tribe that could get only as much iron as a fire blown by hand-bellows will smelt, or suppose him born among ourselves before lathes existed; what chance would there have been of the steam engine? Imagine a Laplace unaided by that slowly developed system of mathematics which we trace back to its beginnings among the Egyptians; how far would he have got with the *Mécanique Céleste*?

Mr. Sadler's next point is that "Labour is not enough. Trained scientists are needful." This implies that, in Mr. Sadler's opinion, the work of trained scientists is not labour. What is it then?

When we use the term "Labour" we mean what Marx quite clearly explains in *Capital* :—

I use the term labour power or capacity for labour to denote the aggregate of those *bodily and mental capacities* existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use-value of any kind. (Italics ours.) (Vol. I, p. 154. Allen & Unwin Edition.)

Scientific staffs and inventors employed by companies to exercise their "bodily and mental capacities," are members of the working class like any other paid servants earning their living by selling their labour-power. The capitalist buys the use of "brains" as he buys bricks, in the market at the market price. Scientific workers are recognising this and organising in their trade unions to bargain about the price.

In many industries to-day, owing to technical conditions, invention and discovery are no longer left to chance, as the employers find that it pays to employ trained and specialised staffs, making inventions, not for themselves, but for their employers. But it is not true that inventions come only from "trained scientists." Still less was it true in the past.

In the early days of capitalism they came in the main from ordinary workers.

Brunel, the famous engineer, giving evidence before the House of Lords Committee in 1851, was asked whether scientific men or operatives were usually responsible for inventions, and replied: "I think the greater number of inventions have originated with practical operatives." (Quoted in *The Modern Case for Socialism*, by A. W. Humphrey, 1928, p. 83.)

Mr. J. A. Hobson, in his *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, points out that "nearly all the great textile inventors were practical men, most of them operatives immersed in the details of their craft. . . . Cartwright alone was a man leading a life of thought." (P. 80.)

The Right Hon. Christopher Addison, Minister of Munitions during the War, tells how the Inventions Board selected from an enormous number of suggestions, received in 18 months, over 2,000 which were good enough to be the subject of further experiment. He says that "the experience of the Inventions Department was that, despite a good deal of rubbish, suggestions and ideas of a valuable kind . . . streamed in upon us from the humblest quarters." (Italics ours.) (*Practical Socialism*, Vol. II, p. 12.)

The Railways and the Post Office are organisations which have special research staffs, but in addition they receive hundreds or thousands of suggestions from their operating staffs in the course of a year. Mr. J. P. Longmuir, of Mavor and Coulson, Ltd., Glasgow, stated recently that his firm receives 3,000 suggestions a year from its employees. (*Times*, April 12th, 1932.) On the other hand, Mr. C. R. F. Engelbach, of the Austin Motor Company, stated that the mass-production of motor cars "required a very trained brain before suggestions could be of any value. His firm had a trained department to do nothing but think of suggestions."

#### HOW THE CAPITALIST "SAVES."

Mr. Sadler next says that "saving" is required, so that tools and food, etc., can be provided for the workers during the production process, or, as he puts it, "ere the corn be ripe."

It is of course true that workers have to be fed and clothed while engaged in production, and that the food and clothing must come from somewhere. But it is equally true that the capitalist also has to be fed and clothed while his workers are engaged in production. Farmers do not fast and wear a loincloth while waiting for the corn to be harvested and milled and for the wool to be shorn and woven. The food and clothing both for employers and workers comes from the labours of workers in the food and clothing trades. The talk of the capitalist "saving" these things up and "providing" them is only true in the

purely legal sense that the capitalists own the products of the labour of all workers and can legally withhold the products, or allow them to be used only on terms satisfactory to themselves. The owner of the goods produced by the workers "provides" them for further production in the same sense that our public buildings are erected by the dignitaries who put up a tablet bearing the inscription: "Erected by the Mayor and Aldermen."

The capitalist does "save" in the sense that he does not spend all his income on goods for his own consumption, but his possession of an income (often of colossal amount) is not the result of his inventive faculty, or of his thrift or of his ability. The property income of the capitalist comes to him because as an owner of means of production he can compel propertyless workers to work for him on the condition that they yield up to him all the products and receive back as wages roughly what is required to keep them and their families.

The original accumulation of capital was often achieved by legally and illegally driving peasant owners off the land, a process of force and fraud.

As regards our contemporary capitalists their wealth is for the most part inherited. Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, B.Sc., in his *Economics of Inheritance* (Pub. Routledge, 1929) has shown that only one-third of the men in the "upper and middle classes" have acquired their fortunes largely in their own lifetime.

The late Sir William Ashley, Economic Adviser to the Conservative Party, in his *Economic Organisation of England*, discusses the notion that capital is accumulated by "abstinence" and "self-denial," and says :—

Phrases like these have occasioned no little mirth; it is hard to discover self-denial or parsimony as the world understands these words, in the process by which modern capital is largely accumulated. (p. 157.)

It is absurd of Mr. Sadler to say that he cannot find where Marx deals with this in *Capital*. Over 200 pages are devoted to it in Vol. I alone. (See Chapters XXI to XXIV.)

Summing up, we can say that it is the working class who, speaking generally, provide the brain and muscle required in producing and distributing wealth. They provide inventions, and the income out of

which the capitalist "saves." The statement to which Mr. Sadler objects is a generalisation which cannot be overthrown. H.

#### AMERICA AND THE WAR.

The *Nation* (New York, February 17th, 1932) reports an interesting admission about America's entry into the World War, made by Mr. Ogden L. Mills, Secretary to the U.S.A. Treasury :—

Besides "making the world safe for democracy," the most impelling reason why the United States entered the World-War was to protect its capital loaned abroad. It had loaned money to the Allied nations, and its arms manufactures had rolled vast quantities of war materials to be shot by the Allies into Germany, and against the German army, in protecting France and Belgium.

The *Nation* remarks, Eugene Debs and others were jailed for saying this sort of thing when the war was on.

\* \* \*

#### THE FORD BUBBLE PRICKED.

The Labour admirers of Henry Ford used to claim for him that he had solved the problem of working class poverty and discontent by paying "high" wages. The following is taken from the *News-Chronicle* (April 2nd, 1932) :—

##### FORD WORKERS' STRIKE.

Following the announcement of a general 10 per cent. wage reduction at the Ford motor factory in Cork, several hundred employees went on strike yesterday. They left the works in small bodies until nearly all the staff were out.

The "cut" is the second within a short period, and brings the wages of unskilled men down to £3 a week, compared with the £6 they earned a few years ago.

#### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

##### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b>	... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m. Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Monday</b>	... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b>	... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b>	... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Ridley Road, Dalston, E. 8., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b>	... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b>	... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m. Paragon Road, Hackney, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.
- ECCLIS.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, 11c Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.
- ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop, Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 15, Percy Road E.11. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.
- NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limblee Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10.
- SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary, A. Scott, 13, Wulfric Place, Manor Estate.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wallington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33 Ernest St., E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.
- TOOTING.**—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Sec. W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., lands, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets White all Sch ois, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE BACKWARD COUNTRIES A PROBLEM OF SOCIALIST POLICY

Practically the whole world has now come under the domination of the capitalist, and the question of the policy to be followed by the workers in the countries where industrial development lags behind is one that Socialists have to answer. India, China and countries in South America and Africa give examples of highly developed industry as an oasis in a desert of peasant proprietorship.

Some backward countries are completely independent political units in themselves; some are political units but are incorporated in a larger federation that has at its centre a superior power; others are subject nations where the centre of political powers is outside the boundaries of the territory. The workers in the third group are faced with the perplexing question of nationalist movements, and the problem for them is shall they in the first place give support to the nationalist movement until the political centre has been transferred within the border and then take up the opposition to the capitalists. This view obtains strength from the difficulty of getting workers to organise on class lines while the air is full of appeals to patriotism backed up by the weight of tradition.

Nationalist movements have this fundamental objection. By lining capitalists and workers up together they obscure the class line by the assumption that they are brothers fighting a vital battle, and tend to push the class antagonism of the two entirely into the background. Such movements are almost always given a religious turn which adds to the confusion. In Ireland nationalism and religion were used for ages to keep the exploited divided.

There is the further objection that these movements have a harmful effect on the worker's struggle in other countries. The

heroic nationalist of one country is hand in glove with the oppressor of another.

The principle to be adopted is a simple one. Capitalism is capitalism the world over and its supporters everywhere are the enemies of the workers. A genuine Socialist movement is recognised everywhere by the adoption of identical principles, except in minor matters of detail. Consequently those who are the enemies of the workers in one country are recognised as the same in all countries.

To those who imagine it is necessary to help on the industrialisation of a country it may be pointed out that one nation learns from, and is helped by, another. By so doing it undergoes a hothouse development avoiding the pitfalls and being relieved of much of the painful learning experiences met with by the pioneer nations in their slow development. They travel from crude means of production to the latest methods at high speed, and in the course of a generation or two. This development can be safely left to the capitalists themselves, whose main interest it is, and need not involve either the thought or the energy of the workers. Time spent in this direction while it might assist industrialisation would ultimately be paid for by the increasing difficulty of developing an independent working class movement out of a situation of conflicting policies. So many forces are at work to-day obscuring the class line that it is imperative for those seeking emancipation to keep it clear and prominent to the utmost of their ability. The Russian movement will eventually have to pay for indiscretions in this direction committed in its name, just as the Socialist movement in other countries is suffering from the twist Russia has given to the ideas of Socialism.



To illustrate the view put forward let us take India as an example of a country, relatively backward, and in subjection to a political control exercised from outside.

It is a country that has been for centuries a considerable source of income for British adventurers and investors. From the beginning, under the title of taxation, ingenuity has been pushed to extremes to devise methods of squeezing booty out of the inhabitants.

European traders found their way over the country and established commercial centres finally backed by the guns of the home country. England eventually won the fight for commercial exploitation and established supremacy over the country, subjecting the natives to a tyrannous rule, the results of which are seen in the servile attitude of sections of the coloured population and the swaggering dictatorial attitude of the whites. Capitalist industry began to make slow headway in the country until it reached its present level, where there is a considerable capitalist industry in existence—particularly in the textile trades, and iron and steel.

India is a large country with a huge population divided on the question of religion. Nine-tenths of the people are impoverished peasants living in villages. A large proportion of the rest float between town and village and look back to the villages as their homes where they will return to end their days on the savings they hope to accumulate from their work in the towns. In fact a part of their earnings go back to the villages to help their relatives: a position similar to that of the Irish peasant emigrant.

Since the English occupation capitalists from other countries have obtained entry, and English, American, Japanese, German and Indian capitalists compete for the wealth wrung from the exploited Indian worker and peasant, and each seeks to use the discontent of the exploited for its own ends.

The solution of the Indian question lies in the hands of the workers and not of the peasants, for if the peasant would lift the load of misery from his shoulders he must throw in his lot with the worker. Peasant culture, quite apart from the fact that it faces backward towards the time when man was entirely at the mercy of the forces of nature, is based on a method of private ownership that, with the growth of population, offers only a meagre existence at the

best of times and breeds fratricidal strife over the division of property. However large a country may be, there is a limit to the cultivable area, and consequently a limit to the separate plots worked on primitive methods. Peasant culture is ultimately doomed in any event, so the peasant must face the fact.

In spite of the large proportion of the population living in villages it is only a question of time before modern methods of farming and mechanization transform the primitive village culture and bring into existence an agricultural proletariat of a similar standing to that of his industrial brother. The process is already well under way. Agricultural machinery, motor transport and the recently completed Sukker barrage are harbingers of the new era.

Until recently the villages have been self-supporting and the age-old love of the peasant for his plot of land has encouraged those who advocated a return to the primitive spinning wheel. But there are forces at work which compel the peasant, in spite of himself, to throw overboard his independence, and will in any case ultimately defeat the advocates of this "back to the land" movement. The introduction of manufactured products has given the villager new outlooks and fresh needs which demand satisfaction and which bring him into the grip of modern industrial production. National aspirations will not be strong enough to kill the desire for the cheap products of advanced industry and for the new forms of enjoyment, such as wireless and the cinema which native capitalists will find it profitable to introduce.

While at the moment, then, the peasant will be a drag on the workers' movement there is no need to compromise in policy on his account, as conditions will fight the battle and win.

Industrially, the Indian workers must take trade union action and fight the battle for better conditions, as their hours of labour and other working conditions are far behind their fellows in other countries.

Politically, they must organise as a unit of the International Socialist movement on a basis similar to that printed on the back page of this paper. Without a share in the franchise that gives the opportunity to control political power they cannot obtain control of the political machinery, and, therefore, however large their organisation, they are impotent. Their policy should,

therefore, include a demand for an extension of the franchise.

This raises the question of whether they should ally themselves with those advocating some form and degree of Indian self-government. On the one hand, there is no question about the wealthy, whose interests would be served doing their part in pushing forward autonomy. On the other hand, there is no doubt that India is becoming too unwieldy to be handled efficiently from this country and the fact is being recognised by those in power. This, together with the work of interested parties in other countries as well as in India, will eventually bring about the concession of some form of Dominion status.

Capitalists, blinded by their greed for profits, have a tendency to go after the immediate end and leave the long view to look after itself. Time after time they have ignored the wiser counsels of their paid professors when a momentary advantage was to be gained, and turned a blind eye to the evil effects their policy might have on their brother capitalists. In spite then of the spread of Socialist ideas in India there is no reason to doubt that capitalist sections there, as long ago in England, will take up the workers' franchise question in an attempt to secure support for private projects of their own. On the other hand, the growth of capitalism in India in the long run will itself compel those in power to concede the franchise and other modifications in the political machinery in a democratic direction to allow the smooth running of their exploiting system.

Workers in India, therefore, should unite on a basis of Socialist principles and organise for the establishment of Socialism. They should take what steps are necessary to secure a franchise for this purpose, but they should not unite with any other parties or give adherence to any other bodies, even those masquerading as pure and simple franchise organisations, as by so doing they would lose independence. So-called franchise organisations invariably have "interests" behind them. Whether India keeps in or falls out of the "British Commonwealth of Nations" is immaterial from the workers' standpoint as long as they have machinery available to enable them to take political control out of the hands of the capitalists. Each Socialist Party in each country will be working to this end and the progress of all will roughly correspond in

the end. When the movement in India has reached a point where the workers are nearing victory the progress in other parts of the Empire will be such that the capitalists will have their hands full and will be unable to send forces to interfere with the Indian movement.

GILMAC.

### AMERICAN NOTES.

Only a few years ago articles were appearing in the press of the U.S.A., informing all and sundry that there would be no more crises like there had been in the past. Lord bless you, No! The capitalists here had solved the problem, they had adopted a new method, known as mass production and standardisation. Wages were no longer to be based on the cost of production of the labour-power of the worker (in other words, the cost of enabling the wage-worker to be an efficient wealth producer and to keep him in that condition), they were now to be based on the worker's output. The instalment plan was also boosted as a way to get rid of surplus products. Lots of propaganda was broadcasted for the wage-slaves' especial benefit; we were given to understand that there were no classes in this great country and at the same time that any worker who had a little ambition and grit could get out of his class with very little effort.

Another sample of the same kind of piffle said that there are no classes here, that the workers are rapidly becoming capitalists themselves, directly aided by the older capitalists. No longer did the benevolent employers want all the profits. They were now anxious to hand some of it over to the workers, and advised them to buy a share or so of stock in the company employing them, to be paid, of course, out of their wages at so much per week. In some cases the wage-slaves were so ungrateful as not to care much for this great opportunity, and were frequently fired, since the employer disliked having unappreciative "partners" around. But it has been given out by a statistician that the shares thus held are like our American beer, something like one-half of 1 per cent. of the total shares issued. These shares do not give any control of the concerns, the holders having no voting rights.

Lately, the outlook has changed. Wage reductions have taken place to the extent of eleven or twelve billions of dollars, and



the end is not yet in sight. Firms are still cutting their wages bill, and there is very little opposition being put up by the working class, as the labour market is very much in favour of the masters. These reductions have been going on in spite of all the talk that wages should not be reduced, that we cannot expect to have prosperity if the capitalists can't get rid of their goods, and that if the workers' wages are cut down they cannot buy back the products. But in spite of some capitalists seeing this contradiction, they have fallen into line with the rest and reduced wages.

In the Southern States, due to changed methods of farming, it is claimed that about six millions of people will have to give up this method of making a livelihood. They are petty farmers, share workers and croppers who are finding that they cannot make a living and will be forced into wage-slavery. The income of these land operators is very low. In 1921 the average income of the Black farmer was 32 cents per day for each member of the family; renters, 14 cents; Black croppers, 18 cents; White croppers, 8 cents. The family income given for Chatham county, North Carolina, varied from \$625 to \$153 per year, making an average of \$424 per year.

In these Southern states there is cheap power, and plenty of low-priced labour-power. The Chambers of Commerce of these States invite the capitalists to come South because of the attraction of cheap land, low taxes and easy labour laws. The State of Georgia, for instance, allows sixty hours' work per week; no limit is put on the working day as long as the hours worked in any one week do not exceed sixty. These, and many other things, are called to the employer's attention, in spite of the officials of capitalist concerns believing that wage reductions will worsen the depression. It is stated that factories have been opening up in the Southland at the rate of one every four days for the last five years. Here are some of the firms that have established themselves in the South territory: Standard Oil, United States Steel, Proctor & Gamble, Goodrich and Goodyear Rubber Companies, Dupont Explosives. These and many more were listed in an article which stated that the rush down in this low-wage belt puts the Klondike gold rush in the shade. These companies know, if they do not take advantage of the conditions prevailing, others soon will, because

of the larger profits expected. At the end of the year 1927, 67 per cent. of all the cotton-goods in the United States was manufactured in Southern States.

In 1927, in 16 States known as Southern Territory, there were 37,350 manufacturing establishments, employing 1,679,798 workers, engaged in making more than 200 different products. In the United States as a whole, the manufacturing establishments were 191,866, with 8,353,793 workers. There is no doubt that there has been quite an increase in the South since 1927.

The wage paid by these new masters is considerably lower than the Northern wage-rate. The average rate in all industries, in Georgia, \$702; Alabama, \$884; Tennessee, \$773; in North and South Carolina, \$632 per year. Compare wages in the North: Massachusetts, \$1,228; Pennsylvania, \$1,382; Ohio, \$1,448; for the United States as a whole, \$1,300. These figures are taken from the Census of Manufacturers in 1927. It was there shown that the worker in the North is more productive than the worker of the South; that the difference in output was 7.2 per cent. But it cost the Pennsylvania employer \$847 more wages to get this increase, thus leaving the advantage to the Southern field at the rate of 20.4 per cent. This is the magnet that is attracting the capitalists to the South.

Now, also, these companies do not have any unions to contend with, as this new crop of wage-slaves have not, as yet, had much experience in their new status. What they get in wages looks to them like a small fortune, the employers appear to them like great benefactors, and trade union organisers are given short shrift. They have no strikes to interfere with them. Even the staffs of the American Federation of Labour get from 10 to 20 per cent. less wages than those in the North. So business is flocking to the low-wage area in spite of the past assurances to the workers that a "high wage scale" would be maintained.

There is not much talk about high wages now. We hear that what is needed is cheaper goods, "so that the benefit to the consumers will be enlarged"; this is to be the enticement to get the public to buy the surplus, the magic wand to induce the people to spend. All sorts of suggestions are being advocated here to get us out of the depression. The capitalists told us that high

tariffs would solve the problem, so the tariffs were increased. Now we are told that high tariffs are one of the causes of the depression, and must be lowered. Prohibition is another red-herring that is being dragged out; we are told that if it were not for this law, if light wine and beer were allowed to come back, this would bring back prosperity. They forget that in other capitalist countries, where Prohibition is not the law, the crisis also prevails. A Bond issue of five billions is being suggested, to carry on public works, but is not receiving much support at the present, since this would mean higher taxes, and we are told that what is needed is lower taxes.

How are the workers reacting to the changed conditions here? They are looking for all kinds of solutions to the fix they find themselves in. Hunger marches are taking place, some of them organised by the Communist Party. The latest one was led by a sky pilot. Of course, the parson's gang was looked upon as being made up of good, loyal American citizens, and considerable discretion was shown in handling them by the powers that be. While the other marches were allowed, the authorities did not view them with so much favour. The slaves are ready to back up any scheme that promises to solve their problems; unemployed insurance, the lifting of Prohibition, lower tariffs, trade with Russia, almost anything but the real solution. The Communist Party here is making a great noise about trade with Russia, and about the dole for the unemployed. They think that if they can get the wage-slaves to rally for the dole and other reforms, then these slaves will be good material and can be led to fight for Socialism at the behest of the leaders. They have not yet learned the lesson that capitalist politicians can advocate all these reforms and use them to get into office. In fact, at present they are certainly in a more favourable position to get into office than the Communist Party is. Like the reformist "Socialist Party" here, when Liberal candidates were put up by the capitalist parties, the "Socialist" ranks were depleted. This has occurred more than once, and each time we heard great cries from these so-called Socialists that "the capitalists have stolen our thunder." To get elected on a real Socialist platform is far from the minds of the leaders of either of these parties. What they are after is something to get them into office as quickly

as possible. Having their ears to the ground, listening to what the workers are concerned about, they put these things in their programmes. Thus they catch the unwary, and to them what the hell else matters as long as they can get to the pie counter on the shoulders of the backward workers. The results of this kind of "tactics" have been amply demonstrated by the Labour Party in England, Social-Democratic Party in Germany, Socialist Party of America, and others elsewhere. Instead of accomplishing what they claim, the effect is just the opposite; workers lose interest when they see that these parties, on getting into power, are as helpless as the openly capitalist parties in face of the social problem.

There can be only one solution to this problem as far as the workers are concerned, and that is a change of ownership of the productive forces, from the present form to one where they will be held in common by and in the interest of Society. All else is of no account.

TAFFY BROWN  
(Workers' Socialist Party, U.S.A.).

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.).

Readers in the U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party of the United States, at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7).

The Workers' Socialist Party are our agents in the U.S.A., and the "SOCIALIST STANDARD" is obtainable from them at the above address.

\* \* \*

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA.

The recently re-formed Socialist Party of Canada has adopted as its basis the Declaration of Principles of the S.P.G.B., with a few alterations of wording necessary to fit in with Canadian conditions. The address of the S. P. of C. is 204, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg; where the "Socialist Standard" can be obtained.

### BIRKENHEAD AND WIRRAL.

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" and sympathisers in the above districts are requested to get into touch with Edmund Howarth, 6, Woodsorrel Road, Cloughton, Birkenhead, Cheshire.



## NOTES BY THE WAY.

## MAXTON THE PROPHET.

Mr. J. Maxton, M.P., made a speech on August 21st, 1931, in which he forecast the collapse of capitalism not later than February, 1932. He said:—

I am perfectly satisfied that the great capitalist system . . . is now at the stage of final collapse

They may postpone the collapse for a month, two months, three months, six months, but collapse is sure and certain. (*Daily Record*, August 22nd, 1931.)

Six months from August 21st, 1931, brings us to February 21st, 1932, but so little did Mr. Maxton and his fellow I.L.P.'ers believe in their own prophecy that in the early months of 1931 they were planning to bring out the *New Leader* in a new and improved form. Either they did not believe in the imminent collapse or else they had overlooked the fact that a sudden collapse of capitalism, if it did take place, would leave the population so busily engaged in trying to secure the bare necessities of life out of the general chaos that they would have no time or thought for *New Leader's* or any other non-essential.

But Mr. Maxton was not at all abashed by the non-fulfilment of his prophecy. Speaking in the House of Commons on April 8th, 1932, he tried again. He said:—

I believe it will crash within measureable time, because I do not think that anything that we are doing now will do more than postpone the inevitable act. (*Hansard*, April 8th, Col. 476.)

It will be noticed that the comparative precision of "two, three or six months," has given place to the studied vagueness of "within measureable time."

Mr. Brockway, who is Chairman of the I.L.P., also has a shot at prophesying. Speaking at Ashington on April 24th, he predicted "a bloodless revolution, possibly within the next four years" (*Manchester Guardian*, April 25th). Mr. Brockway has evidently learned from the example of the Russian five-year plans that there is safety for the politician in promising the millennium, not for next week, but for a few years ahead.

\* \* \*

## TOO SLOW AND TOO FAST.

Twelve months ago the Labour Party and I.L.P. were attacking the Parliamentary system on the ground that it is an obsolete

machine incapable of speedy legislation. Speaking at Cardiff on March 13th, Mr. G. Lansbury, leader of the Labour Party, remarked on the ability of the present Government to get legislation through "in a few hours" (*Times*, March 14th). On Friday, April 22nd, a Bill to allow the President of the Board of Trade to sit in Parliament went through all its stages in about twenty minutes. (*News-Chronicle*, April 23rd.)

Major H. L. Nathan, M.P., writing in the *News-Chronicle* (February 26th, 1932), pointed out that it took three months of Parliamentary time to turn England from a Protectionist to a Free Trade country (over 80 years ago), and took only three weeks to reverse the process.

\* \* \*

## DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT.

It is one of the peculiarities of the reformists that they are always able to tell us about the marvels taking place ten thousand miles away as a result of applying their policy, but never able to give us visible proof on the spot. American so-called "progressives" look across the herring-pond with wonder and admiration at the British Labour Party and I.L.P., and are trying to make a similar model for home consumption. British Labourites tell inspiring but quite mythical tales about "Socialist" Vienna; while the organ of the Austrian Social Democrats writes of the delights of London boroughs where the Labour Party has a majority on the council. It was for many years a favourite platform trick with "left-wing" speakers in London to praise the sterling merits of "revolutionary" Glasgow, and doubtless, Glasgow had its eyes fixed on Buenos Aires or Timbuctoo.

It is not surprising that the I.L.P., one of the oldest and most ill-balanced of all the world's reformist parties, should in its time have had a passion for every continent in turn. Once it was Yucatan, with its falsely described Socialist triumphs, then it was Australia, and particularly Queensland. We hear less now about "Socialism in Queensland," but probably the I.L.P. still sells its absurd pamphlets describing "Socialism in Practice" in that area. Then for a time it was the Scandinavian countries, with their small holdings and co-operative buying and selling agencies, to which we were urged by the I.L.P. to direct our gaze. Then Mrs.

M. A. Hamilton and H. N. Brailsford, and other leaders of the I.L.P., discovered America and assured us that Ford and his fellow mass productionists had solved the problem of poverty and proved Marx wrong.

Then the American scene was discovered to be heavily blurred with ugly daubs of destitution, unemployment, unrest and depression, so the I.L.P. had to take another exploring expedition, this time to Asia, but with a passing glance at the glorious promise of Republican Spain. The Asiatic Paradise takes in Ghandi and also parts of China, those parts where Communist influence is said to be strong, but naturally the real centre of I.L.P. attraction is Moscow. Never having understood what the basis of capitalism is, the I.L.P. simply cannot grasp that State capitalism is not Socialism. It was inevitable, therefore, that they should "fall for" the Bolsheviks, although they find it hard to stomach their fellow worshippers, the British Communists. The I.L.P. has swallowed whole the Bolshevik claim that State capitalism in Russia is Socialism, and the *New Leader* (February 12th) comes out with the following:—

In Soviet Russia Socialism is not the music of the future. It is a reality of the present. During the past year the Soviet Union has completed the construction of the foundations of Socialism. By the end of the Second Five-Year Plan it will have completed the construction of the Socialist Society.

Like all the other "Socialist" mares'-nests picked up by the I.L.P., Russia will in due course be dropped like Yucatan and Queensland, Denmark and U.S.A. It has its funny side, but the effects of this sort of propaganda are wholly bad. Workers who are persuaded that the problems of the working class are being solved abroad by a programme of reforms cannot be expected to see the necessity of abandoning reform programmes at home.

Russia now is lauded by its distant worshippers as "the land without unemployment," the land which has escaped the depression, the land without class conflicts, and so on. The faith of these worshippers is founded on illusion. In its present stage of capitalist development, while the vast plans for building factories and railways and for equipping town and rural industries are in progress, Russia can mask for a time some of the more glaring evidences of capitalist contradictions. Even so, the conditions of the Russian workers are admittedly bad. The following is the con-

sidered view of the Moscow correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*:—

A fair summary of the Soviet food situation would be somewhat as follows. There is no mass starvation remotely comparable with the famine of Asiatic proportions that developed in 1921-2, when a drought of unprecedented severity came as the climax to seven devastating years of foreign and internal warfare and social and economic upheaval. Concentrating in its hands considerable, although not adequate, food reserves, the Soviet Government, in the main, with occasional local exceptions and interruptions, has been able to give the industrial working class a regular supply of the coarser and simpler foodstuffs, and has also, at least in the larger cities, been able to safeguard the health of the children by giving them some preferential feeding. At the same time considerable numbers of people in the towns (especially in the provinces), and still more in the country districts, are to-day obliged to eke out their subsistence on a diet as meagre, as barren, and as unsatisfying as would fall to the lot of the most destitute unemployed in Western Europe and America. (*Manchester Guardian*, May 20th, 1932.)

At no very distant date the hysterical propaganda about the Russian paradise will be swept away by hard economic facts, and Russia will be seen for what it is—one of the capitalist states subject to the same forces and exhibiting the same general characteristics as the others.

\* \* \*

## THE WORKERS AND THE VOTE.

We are often told by advocates of "direct action" that the workers are becoming more and more disgusted with Parliament and are turning away from political action. So far there is no evidence of this happening to the great majority of the voters. The contrary is true. In Great Britain the proportion of electors who actually go to the polls has increased considerably during the past 14 years. According to information given in the "Constitutional Year Book" (1930, p. 289), the proportion was 58.9 per cent. in 1918, 75.4 per cent. in 1922, 74.1 per cent. in 1923, 80.6 per cent. in 1924, and 79.8 per cent. in 1929. In 1931 the proportion was again about 79 per cent. or 80 per cent.

France, Spain and Italy have been strongholds of the Syndicalists and of the theories about the uselessness of political action. Yet in the Spanish elections last year a high proportion of the voters went to the polls. In the French elections in April, 83 per cent. of the electors voted! (see *Evening Standard*, April 30th). In the last elections in Italy it is claimed that nearly 90 per cent. voted.

H.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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**The Socialist Standard**

JUNE,



1932

**THE CAMPAIGN FOR INFLATION.****A WORKERS' DELUSION.**

It would be hard to find a period comparable with the past year for the rapidity with which the capitalist politicians and economists have changed their minds about the way to escape from the dilemmas of capitalism. The National Government was formed to save the gold standard—and promptly abandoned it. What was to have been a catastrophe was then welcomed by the Liberal, Labour and Tory press and politicians as the one thing needed to put us on the road to prosperity.

The depreciation of sterling having failed to make the situation any better tariffs were hurriedly rushed through, but already the Protectionists, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer downwards, are warning their followers that Protection is not enough. The *Daily Mail*, which faithfully promised that protection would revive industry and reduce unemployment, is now reduced to the feeble argument that the increase of 85,000 in the number of unemployed during April does not mean that Protection has failed, because "without our new tariff our position would have been much worse" (*Daily Mail*, May 10th, 1932). Tariffs were introduced to get Great Britain out of the trade depression, but the *Mail* now finds that "nothing we can do

will remedy this until a general revival in trade takes place." It is the old story of the quack doctor who sells "hope" and coloured water. The "cure for bad trade" will only cure if the disease cures itself.

The General Election in October last was fought largely round the fears of inflation. The National Government leaders waived worthless German 100,000 mark notes before the eyes of their listeners and told horrifying stories of the hardships inflation and rising prices would bring in their train. Now six months later inflation is all the fashion among the newspapers and Members of Parliament representing the interests of those industrial capitalists who would stand to gain by inflation. They hope to get higher prices for their goods and to pay off their debts to the banks, debenture holders, etc., in depreciated currency, as was done in Germany, Austria, France and elsewhere during the inflation periods. The *Sunday Express*, one of Lord Beaverbrook's papers, says:—

How rapidly the situation has developed!  
How swiftly minds have moved!

Inflation is now no longer left to Lord Beaverbrook. Or in the House to Mr. Boothby. The movement is growing and spreading.

**MOST PUBLIC MEN ARE NOW IN FAVOUR OF INFLATION. PRACTICALLY EVERY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT SPEAKING IN THE DEBATES IS AN INFLATIONIST.**

Some of them are no longer even shy of the word. The movement is extended to many of the newspapers. It is even being adopted by the *Times*.

(*Sunday Express*, May 15th, 1932.)

It is hardly necessary to say that prominent members of the I.L.P. and Labour Party are rushing in to join the inflation circus. Miss Ellen Wilkinson, former Labour M.P., who has just been readopted as Labour Party candidate, contributed to the *Daily Express* (on April 18th) an article in which she joined with Lord Beaverbrook in backing inflation.

Letters written to the Labour papers by workers who have been led away by this sort of propaganda show a pathetic trustfulness in capitalist benevolence, and a great lack of knowledge of the workings of capitalism. One letter, written to the *Daily Herald* (May 11th) is a good sample. The writer remarks on the existence of over-produced goods which the workers are too poor to buy, and says:—

The printing presses of the world should turn out more notes, which should be given round equally to all adults.

What is here overlooked is that as all the goods are privately owned, the higher prices obtained for them will not go "equally to all adults," but entirely to the capitalist owners. Does anyone imagine that the capitalists who own the means of production and the products are advocating inflation with the object of giving more wealth to the workers and retaining less of it for themselves?

When prices rise sharply the workers may anticipate that if they use their organised bargaining power to its full extent they will be able to secure some increase in money wages. But the experience of England before and during the war, and of Germany, France and other countries during the post-war inflation, has shown unmistakably that the increases in wages lag far behind the rising prices and leave the workers who are in employment worse off for the time being than when prices are stable or are falling. Just as the capitalists seek to force wages down during a period of falling prices so they will strenuously resist demands for wage-increases when prices are rising. Being the owners of the means of production and distribution the capitalists, although at loggerheads with each other over inflation and deflation, will retain the whip hand over the workers. Not inflation or deflation, but the abolition of private ownership is the way out for the workers.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.**

Readers in New Zealand are asked to communicate with the S.P.N.Z. at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland. The S.P.N.Z. are our agents and the *Socialist Standard* can be obtained at the above address.

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**ANOTHER COMMUNIST LEADER WALKS THE PLANK.**

The expulsion of Mr. J. T. Murphy from the Communist Party shows up once more the conflicts between the leaders of that organisation for the control of its confused rank and file. The issue giving rise to the expulsion was no question of Socialist principle or working-class interest. Theoretically it was a conflict of slogans. The Politbureau called upon the workers to "Stop the transport of munitions"; Mr. Murphy preferred to demand "Credits for the Soviet Union!" Rather slender ground for a charge of heresy, one would imagine; but there is probably more in the matter than meets the eye.

As is usual in the Communist Party, the expulsion was carried out dictatorially. The Politbureau expelled Mr. Murphy in answer to his resignation, and informed the membership afterwards. The Communist Party, unlike the S.P.G.B., provides no opportunity for a member to defend himself against a charge before a branch meeting, delegate meeting or Annual Conference. We have, therefore, no means of testing the amount of support Mr. Murphy had among the members of the Party. It is, however, interesting to notice that the fusillade of condemnation of Mr. Murphy in the columns of the *Daily Worker* contains at least one significant admission. The Working Bureau of the London District Party Committee, "endorsing the decision of the Politbureau," drew that body's attention to the "weakness revealed in our ranks by the fact that nowhere within the Party did any comrades appear to recognise Murphy's wrong line or query his article" (*Daily Worker*, May 19th).

Mr. Murphy's slogan could, of course, be adopted by any capitalist wishing to export goods to Russia. Most Liberals and some Conservatives are in favour of such procedure. At the same time, the slogan officially favoured is of the sort likely to appeal to the sentimental anarchists and general strike fanatics, who fondly hug the delusion that the operations of Governments enjoying the political support of the major portion of the workers can be seriously hampered by attempts at minority mass action. The workers and unemployed (unable, as they are, in their present state of disorganisation, to defend their wages and insurance benefits against "economy")



cuts) are expected to rise in defence of the Russian Government! Could folly go further?

Mr. Murphy's lukewarmness is not altogether a mystery. He has for many years been associated with an important munition producing area (i.e., Eastern Sheffield), and working-class electors of Brightside, whose votes he solicited at the last General Election, not being Socialist, can hardly be expected to display enthusiasm over a proposal to curtail their chance of getting or holding a job. They may want capitalism to be administered more favourably to themselves, but there is the rub—they want capitalism! And no one knows that better than Mr. Murphy. From his point of view, full-time production of munitions or anything else for the defence of the Soviet Union, or for the defence of China from Japanese imperialism, or any other old "ism," would therefore be a much more attractive election cry.

That he is concerned with "Work or Maintenance" by the capitalists, and not with emancipation from capitalist domination, is made clear by his election address of October, last year. Boasting of the "magnificent demonstration" of the unemployed to the Labour Council on the 7th of that month, in which he played a leading part, he said this "clearly shows the way in which the workers can move forward. Already we have gained concessions against the economy cuts. Mass action and again mass action will defeat the economy proposals of the National Government and the Labour Party."

The "concessions" he mentioned consisted of the promises by the representatives of the Council which the leaders of the deputation allege that they received and upon the supposed strength of which they led the demonstrators peacefully home again. It is worth noting, too, that less than five minutes before Mrs. Moule (a leader of the deputation) announced the obtaining of the promises, Mr. Murphy had been emphasising from the platform that the Council, dominated by the Labour Party, had broken every promise they had ever made. It is not surprising, therefore, that this same Mr. Murphy, who was prepared to treat a promise as a concession in his election address, should soon find it necessary to publish an "exposure" of the local Labour leaders for failing to keep their promises. In a pamphlet entitled "Hand-

rags of Law and Order," issued a month or so ago, Mr. Murphy registers a feeble complaint about the "hypocrisy" of the Labour chairman of the local Public Assistance Committee and others administering the Means Test. Mass action had ignominiously failed to relieve, in the slightest degree, the intensified poverty of the unemployed. Mr. Murphy's pamphlet therefore was not merely an exposure of the Labour leaders; it was equally an exposure of one of the policies of the Communist Party.

If Mr. Murphy has, therefore, been expelled, it is not because he has failed to do his share in misleading working-class dupes. He has not deviated from any clearly defined policy. Opportunist to the core, the Party has adopted various contradictory policies. Under such conditions nothing is easier than for a group of leaders to turn the Party machine against another leader less popular. Intrigue thrives where dictators exploit the politically inexperienced. That is the general lesson of Communist expulsions.

Mr. Murphy, who was expelled in spite of his willingness to sign a retraction drawn up by himself, but not satisfactory to the Party leaders, is now denounced by them in extravagant terms as a deserter from Communist principles. He joins a large body of former Communist leaders who were once given servile hero worship and are now treated as enemies and outcasts. It is not that Mr. Murphy has changed, but only that a new clique are in control because they have gained favour in Moscow.

E. B.

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### MARX AND DICTATORSHIP.

A correspondent (London, E.C.1) asks the following question:—

I notice that you class yourselves as "Marxists." How can you explain the following to be in accordance with S.P.G.B. principles. It is taken from Marx's criticism of the Gotha Programme.

The question, therefore, now arises, what transformation will the State-system experience in a communist society? . . . . Between capitalist society and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding with this there will be a period of political transition, during which the State can be nothing other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

(Italics mine.)  
Can you explain what Marx meant by the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat? Does not the above quotation show that the S.P.G.B. is at variance with Marx and Engels?

### Reply.

One of the questions put by our correspondent was answered by Engels himself in his introduction to the German edition of "The Civil War in France." The introduction was written in London in 1891, on the 20th anniversary of the Commune. Translated into English, it was published in 1920 by the New York Labour News Company in a pamphlet called "The Paris Commune."

Engels' introduction, after surveying the events of the Commune and the lessons to be drawn from it, concludes with the following words:—

The German philistine has lately been thrown once again into wholesome paroxysms by the expression "dictatorship of the proletariat." Well, gentle sirs, would you like to know how this dictatorship looks? Then look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Commune was an instance of majority control based upon democratic elections. There was no suppression of the newspapers or the propaganda of the minority, and no denial of their right to vote. The Communards, having once obtained control of the State, set about democratising the machinery of legislation and administration. For example, they filled all positions of administration, justice, etc., through election by universal suffrage, the elected being at all times subject to recall by their constituents. They also paid for all services at the workmen's rate of pay.

This contrasts in a marked way with the Dictatorship in Russia—a dictatorship not

of the proletariat, but of the leaders of the Communist Party.

In Russia the electoral system is not based upon universal suffrage and democratic elections. Many persons, for political reasons, are deprived of the right to vote. In proportion to population, the Town Soviets send to the District Soviets five times as many delegates as are allowed to the Village Soviets. The elections are not direct (as in Great Britain and most countries), but are indirect. That is to say, the All-Union Congress of Soviets is not elected by the electors at first hand, but is elected from Regional Congresses, which in turn are elected from District Soviets, which are elected by the Village and Town Soviets. The power of recall, owing to the devious route it has to follow, is impracticable.

Opposition propaganda and newspapers and opposition candidates for election are suppressed. The persons who are disfranchised are subjected to severe economic disabilities. It is made difficult for them to obtain food and lodging, and various rights are denied to them. (Recently there has been some alleviation of their condition.)

It was for years the rule that Communist Party members did not receive more than a fairly low maximum rate of pay, in this copying the Commune to some extent. It is reported now, however, that this rule has been relaxed since the middle of 1931, when the Russian Government announced a large-scale extension of the policy of inequality of pay among factory workers. It has also to be remembered that Communist Party members have been, and still are, privileged in being able to buy goods at specially low prices.

The Russian Government has for years practised inequality in the payment of those workers and officials who have not been members of the Communist Party and who, therefore, have not been affected by the rule referred to above.

The S.P.G.B.'s view on the transition period after the workers have obtained control of the machinery of Government is in line with that of Marx and Engels, and is opposed to the mis-called "dictatorship of the proletariat" in Russia.

ED. COMM.

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### SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT SOCIALIST POLICY.

1. In the event of the Socialist Party attaining a majority in Parliament, would they endeavour to pass legislation in the "House" for the purpose of obtaining the means of production and distribution for the working class?

2. If so, how would the Socialist Party act in the event of the Capitalists impeding the passing of the legislation, by force or otherwise?

3. I take it, that the Socialist Party is against cuts, including the biggest cut of all (the exploitation and robbery of the working class through the appropriation of the surplus value created by the workers). How would they organise the workers against the attacks which are now taking place—unemployment, Means Test, wage-cuts, extension of hours, etc. Would they combat this by mass action, demonstrations, strikes, or what is the Socialist Party's method of immediate policy, if any?

4. Does the Socialist Party believe in running candidates for the immediate local and Parliamentary elections?

Thorne, Nr. Doncaster.

"SEEKER."

Reply.

(1) The working class need to obtain control of the political machinery before they can institute socialism. Having obtained control of Parliament and the machinery of local government, the workers would enact the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and distribution.

(2) Given a majority of the population determined to achieve socialism and politically organised for that purpose, they could obtain control of the political machinery by the vote unless the capitalists then in power decided to suspend democratic elections. In either event it would have been shown that the majority wanted socialism. If Socialists had obtained control of the political machinery, including the armed forces, the capitalists would not be able seriously to impede the passing of legislation. They would not have at their disposal the means of resisting by force.

If, on the other hand, the capitalists were in power and had suspended democratic elections in order to prevent the Socialist majority from obtaining control of the political machinery, steps would have to be taken to make the position of the usurping minority impossible. In view of the fact that the organised majority would be hostile to the Government and able to interfere with the smooth running of industry, the Government would find it in the long run impossible to make capitalism function in a way satisfactory even to the capitalists. The political position of the Government would be weakened owing to its undemocratic basis

and the state machine would be unable to function on account of the conflicting views among civil and military employees.

When it is recalled that capitalists have in the past had to institute democratic elections in order to make capitalism stable and efficient, even with the population overwhelmingly in favour of capitalism, it will be perceived how hopeless would be their position if they tried to go back on democratic methods in face of a united Socialist majority. Any attempt on their part to carry on without a mandate from the electorate would be bound to break down in time. Even the capitalists themselves would be forced to see the necessity of choosing socialism in preference to chaos.

(3) The S.P.G.B. is against all attempts to reduce the workers' standard of living, and in favour of actions which will raise it, above all, the act which alone will end exploitation, i.e., the institution of socialism. It is only possible to organise the workers to resist "cuts" if the workers wish to resist and believe it to be possible to resist. Similarly, it is only possible to organise the workers for the purpose of achieving socialism when the workers want socialism and believe it possible to achieve it. Neither the S.P.G.B. nor any other body can, at present, induce the working class to organise for the resistance to cuts or for the achievement of socialism, because the majority do not believe either to be possible. As our correspondent will have observed at the last election (if, indeed, such evidence were needed), the overwhelming majority voted for capitalism, and the majority were also prepared to accept cuts because they believed them to be necessary for the maintenance of the social system. Having voted power into the hands of the capitalists, the workers must act in accordance with the situation they have produced. They cannot act as if the situation did not exist. If they attempt to take "mass action" they will be bludgeoned into subjection by the weapon which they placed in the hands of the capitalists last October. Within the limits set by the fact that the capitalists have political power, the workers can demonstrate or strike in order to resist as far as possible further attempts to reduce their standard of living, or in order to raise it. Any sound action on these lines would be supported by the S.P.G.B. in the future as in the past. The actual control and organisation of such action must,

### THE SOCIALIST FORUM.

#### PARLIAMENT AND THE BANKERS.

A Belfast reader asks the following questions:—

(1) Do the bankers or Parliament rule, and is Parliament a tool of the former?

Do the bankers dictate the economic, financial and, for the most part, the political programme Parliament must carry out?

(2) Did the bankers engineer the "crisis" during the autumn of 1931 and compel England to abandon the gold standard and also order a general election to take place?

(3) Could you point out some of Capitalism's contradictions?

Reply.

(1) The Government is dependent for its existence on having the support of a majority in the House of Commons. The M.P.'s are elected by the voters, the great majority of whom are workers. The bankers, like any other section of the population, can only get their interests protected if they can get Parliament to approve.

The property rights and profits of the bankers are protected by law, just as are the property rights and profits of other sections of the capitalist class. Sometimes Governments lean towards one section of the capitalists (e.g., the bankers) and sometimes towards other sections (e.g., industrial capitalists). This they do either because of some urgent problem requiring treatment for the safety of the capitalist system, or in response to pressure from the M.P.'s and the political parties. The last Conservative Government by its rating reforms helped some industrial capitalists at the expense of other capitalists. The present Government has introduced tariffs with the same object. The return to the gold standard in 1925 was of benefit to bankers and to other sections of the capitalists.

That the bankers are able to secure protection by law and by the Government, is due to the fact that the electors approve. At the last election the "National" parties proclaimed that they were protecting the banks against supposed danger which would threaten if the Labour Party gained office. This did not prevent the majority of the workers from voting for the "National" candidates.

The bankers and other sections of the capitalists, of course, do not state openly that they are seeking protection for their own particular interests. They argue that what they seek is in the interest of the

however, be a matter for the workers themselves, since only a small minority are in the S.P.G.B. It is the policy of the S.P.G.B. to point out what such action can achieve and also to point out its limits, i.e., that it is dealing only with the effects of capitalism, and cannot lead to socialism.

(4) The S.P.G.B. is a political party, and therefore, in line with its principles, recognises the necessity of running candidates for local and Parliamentary elections. The question of doing so *immediately* is one to be decided in the light of many factors outside our control. There is no constituency in which there is more than a small minority of socialists, and, therefore, participating in elections at the moment would be only a propaganda effort. It has to be considered in relation to its cost in money and effort, and in relation to alternative and less costly forms of propaganda. This applies particularly to Parliamentary elections in which a deposit of £150 is required and is forfeited if the candidate polls less than one-eighth of the votes. With a growth in the number of socialists the arguments in favour of contesting elections will be stronger and the means will become available.—ED. COMM.

#### SILLY RIVALRY.

On May Day some demonstrators marched on the Japanese Embassy and were bludgeoned by the police. The Communists said that it was their stunt, and the I.L.P. journal, *Forward*, told the Communists how silly it was.

The whole case against Communism might be summed up in the final feature of the day. This was the march against the Japanese Embassy. . . . The forces of police, foot and mounted, were overwhelming, and all that happened was a disgraceful scrimmage, cruel batonings, broken heads and several arrests.

(*Forward*, May 7th.)

Now read what the *New Leader*, the other I.L.P. organ, says:—

The United Column . . . . . was well over 1½ miles in length and very impressive. (This) is a piquant comment on the efforts of the Communist Party speakers to represent themselves the bold and true leaders as distinguished from the faint-hearted I.L.P. The small group which, after the police charges finally did break through to the offices of the Japanese Embassy, consisted almost exclusively of I.L.Pers and was led by one of the most prominent of the Divisional I.L.P. propagandists.

The I.L.P., like boastful schoolboys, thus present themselves to the Communists with the challenge: "We dare you to think of a stunt so damned silly that we won't do it, too."



nation as a whole, and especially of the workers. While the workers lack knowledge of Socialism they will continue to accept this plea and vote into power people and parties favourable to the retention of capitalism in general and more favourable to the particular interests of bankers at one time and industrial capitalists, etc., at another.

Our correspondent should notice what happened at the recent by-election in St. Marylebone. There were two rival Conservative candidates in the field. One of them, Sir Basil Blackett, is a director of the Bank of England and had the backing of most of the Conservative leaders and the party machine. Yet he was beaten by the opposing Conservative candidate who had the backing of the rank and file of the local Conservative Party. The electors decided the issue.

(2) With regard to the question as to whether the bankers engineered the "crisis" of last autumn, we can only say that it is for those who hold that view to bring forward evidence in support. On the face of it the suggestion appears improbable, since the abandonment of the gold standard is hardly likely to have been sought by the bankers who favoured the return to gold in 1925. Our correspondent is referred to the articles published in several issues of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD from September onwards, dealing with various aspects of the "crisis."

(3) The following are some of the contradictions of capitalism.

The existence of great wealth and great poverty side by side.

The existence of unemployment among workers needing the products of industry and willing to produce them, while at the same time the raw materials are lying unused and the factories idle.

Compulsory idleness among unemployed and enforced overwork among the employed workers.

The utilisation of labour-saving machinery not for the benefit of the users of them, but for the benefit of the capitalists, often accompanied by still greater strain on the workers.

The glorification of the leisured class and the simultaneous denunciation of idleness among the workers.

The prohibition of theft by Governments which use armed forces for wholesale robbery from other nations. ED. COMM

## THE S.P.G.B. TRADE UNIONS AND UNEMPLOYED ORGANISATIONS.

A correspondent (T. W. C., Clapham) asks the following questions:—

(1) Am I right in assuming that it would be consistent with the principles of the S.P.G.B. for a member to be outside of a Trade Union?

(2) Can Local Unemployed organisations (not necessarily the N.U.W.M., which is under the influence of the Communist Party) be of some assistance to the unemployed; i.e., in informing members and non-members the correct procedure in obtaining relief, or by deputations in persuading the Local Guardians to grant extra relief. (I know there is a maximum amount which is laid down by the Ministry of Health) or to grant relief to those who have been refused.

(3) Could an unemployed member of the S.P.G.B. be a member of such an organisation?

Reply.

(1) Membership of the S.P.G.B. is not conditional on membership of a trade union, but, of course, membership is denied to those who we know are guilty of anti-working-class action. Many persons who are not trade unionists have sound reasons for their position.

(2) An organisation of unemployed may be of some assistance in the ways mentioned by our correspondent.

(3) Members of the S.P.G.B. are permitted to belong to certain of the organisations of unemployed. ED. COMM.

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## A QUESTION ABOUT ZIONISM.

The Editorial Committee, March 7th, 1932.  
SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Comrades,

As a young Jewish worker, I accept the general principles of the S.P.G.B. But, as I am Jewish I have to bear a double load; both the load of exploitation and the load of anti-semitism. Not only do I have to work and sell my labour-power, but I am forced to have many disadvantages which non-Jewish comrades do not experience. What are the Jews to do? Persecuted as they are, and with the prospect of Socialism being very remote, is it not wise of Jewry all over the world to set up a "National Home" in Palestine.

True it is that I will be exploited in Palestine just as well as in England. But in Palestine I could escape anti-Jewish persecution. The German Jews, now threatened by Hitler, would have nothing to fear from him. The Jew-baiting in Polish Universities would cease. Thus, in my opinion, it is essential for the Jews to have a National Home, under Capitalism.

I trust that you will answer my statements in the next issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, as this is a serious problem. Perhaps you could explain the causes of anti-semitism.

Yours fraternally,

"JEWISH WORKER."

Reply.

Our correspondent says that he accepts the general principles of the S.P.G.B., but his letter shows that this is not correct. The argument, "Socialism being very remote, therefore let us work for something else," is the excuse used by every reformist opponent of Socialism and is a repudiation of S.P.G.B. principles. Socialism will only cease to be remote to the extent that the workers strive for Socialism instead of supporting Zionism and other movements which leave capitalism intact.

A basic principle of the S.P.G.B. is that the abolition of capitalism is the only means of solving the social problem that is common to all workers. Acceptance of our principles carries with it a willingness to concentrate on the basic cause and to push into the background the minor and sectional problems.

The hostility shown by some non-Jews towards some Jews is one of many such minor and sectional problems. It is a continuation of traditional hostility based mainly upon economic causes. Non-Jewish traders found themselves in competition with Jews often more successful than themselves. Christians were for long prevented by the Church from practising usury. Consequently their antagonism towards Jewish traders and moneylenders tended to take the form of antagonism towards Jewish people in general. In some countries, especially where non-Jewish peasants still find themselves forced to incur debts to moneylenders, some of whom are Jewish, this antagonism still continues. It is sometimes deliberately fostered by interested parties in order to cloud the main issue.

But, speaking generally, it is not true that Jews, as such, are subject to any material disability. Can it be said in any real sense that the Readings, Mondes, Rothschilds and others of their social position need a "National Home" in Palestine? So little is that the case, that they take good care not to go there.

Our correspondent does not say what are the "many disadvantages" from which Jews suffer and from which non-Jewish workers are free. The illusions of Zionists on the one side are balanced on the other by the fixed belief held by many non-Jewish workers that the world is in pawn to the Jews. The complaints of some Jews that they are at a disadvantage compared with non-Jews are echoed by the Arabs in

Palestine, but in their eyes it is the Jew who is the privileged and favoured interloper, and the Arab is the bearer of the "double burden." Similar complaints are heard about the favour shown to Freemasons, to members of various Christian sects, and to adherents of certain political parties. Then there are the complaints of the national minorities—the Austrians in Italy, the Germans in Poland and Belgium, the Flemish in Belgium, the negroes in U.S.A., and the Scots and Welsh in Great Britain.

There is a certain amount of substance in all such grievances voiced by individuals and groups of workers, but they pale into insignificance by comparison with the subject position of the working class in their relationship with the capitalist class.

While all of these groups fight each other and work for their separate minor aims, the capitalist system will remain secure.

There are many weaknesses in the Zionist case. It is an impossibility for all the Jews of the world to settle in Palestine even if they wish to do so. The existence of the Jewish State raises another grievance which takes a racial and religious form—that of the Arabs and Palestine Christians.

The reference to the persecution of Jews by the German Hitlerites shows up another flaw in the argument, for the Hitler movement has developed since the setting up of the Jewish State in Palestine.

ED. COMM.

## CATFORD.

Will members and sympathisers in the Catford area communicate with E. Boden, 55, Grangemill Rd., S.E.6. with a view to the formation of a branch.

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b>	... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m. Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Monday</b>	... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b>	... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b>	... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b>	... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b>	... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m. Paragon Road, Hackney, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2 Wintthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington, Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, Mile End. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop, Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 15, Percy Road, E.11. Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary, A. Scott, 13, Wulfric Place, Menor Estate.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 31 Ernest St., E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets on alternate Wednesdays "Labour Centre," 126, Upper Tooting Road. Sec. W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain  
HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE CAPITALIST NEVER LEARNS *BEWILDERED BY EVERY CRISIS.*

For two-and-a-half years the world has been in the throes of a severe business depression. The consequences of that depression have been far-reaching. Unemployment has mounted to fantastic heights, until to-day about 30 million workers in the leading countries are unable to find jobs. In fact, the world-wide incidence and growth of unemployment are so pronounced that even those who but a short time ago were seriously alleging that unemployment was due to the unemployed being too lazy to work, if the chance to do so were offered to them, have been effectively silenced. Nobody now pretends that there are jobs waiting round the corner, and that it is only love of lining up in a queue that keeps workers on the "dole" or the bread line. There are no jobs, just as there are no markets for the thousand and one commodities produced by industry and which the producers find they cannot sell. Plant stands idle just as men and women stand idle. If there are 300,000 miners in Great Britain who will never again be employed to go down a pit, there is likewise redundant plant of all kinds which will cease to be operated. The only difference is that capitalism has to feed its redundant workers in order to avoid trouble; its redundant plant it sooner or later scraps. For examples of this scrapping of plant, it is sufficient to refer to the Lancashire Cotton Corporation, Ltd., and National Shipbuilders' Security, Ltd. The first of these companies was incorporated in 1929 on the initiative of the Bank of England. According to a prospectus published in "The Times" of March 26th, 1931, "the aim of the Corporation is to acquire between 9 million and 10 million equivalent spindles, and it is intended that production shall be concentrated in the most efficient mills . . . the

remaining mills being scrapped." The National Shipbuilders' Security, Ltd., was also begotten by "the Governor and Company of the Bank of England." It was incorporated "for the purpose of assisting the shipbuilding industry by the purchase and dismantling of redundant and obsolete shipyards . . . and the re-sale of the sites under restriction against further use for shipbuilding" (see prospectus in "The Times" of January 21st, 1931). It is a pretty commentary on a social system that it has to devote new savings to the destruction of existing capital equipment because it has too much!

Not only has capitalism come up against the problem of surplus workers and redundant plant, but it is struggling to live down the effects of a too bountiful Nature. Vast areas in America are being thrown out of wheat cultivation, cotton acreage is reduced, Brazil is burning coffee, and wondering whether all her efforts to get stocks down to an "economic level" will be nullified by a bumper crop in 1933-34, sugar cane is not being cut in Cuba, oil wells are shut down in nearly every field, copper output is restricted, as is that of nitrate, the stocks of which equal three-and-a-half years' consumption. The list could be extended to include practically every raw material, but these few examples will suffice to show that want exists to-day, not because there is too little but because there is too much. All that is lacking is the opportunity to make profits, and because of this workers and plant stand idle, misery is widespread, and since Nature will not withhold her gifts they have to be refused or dissipated.

Under conditions such as these, which if we had not experienced them might be unbelievable, it is not surprising that univer-



sally the question is raised: "What has caused this crisis? What is its cure?" If the answer given to this question is to be of any value, there must be brought to the consideration of the subject an historical knowledge of previous crises. Such knowledge is conveniently provided by the late H. M. Hyndman's "Commercial Crisis of the 19th Century," published in a new edition with a preface by J. A. Hobson (Allen & Unwin, Ltd.: 3/6). This book is probably the best Hyndman ever wrote. It is a classic of its kind; it has always been so recognised in interested circles. No one who wishes to understand economic development during the nineteenth century can afford to ignore it. It undoubtedly has its defects. The chief of these is a certain scrappiness in the treatment of the subject. In a work which attempts to cover so wide a field in less than two hundred pages, incompleteness is, however, inevitable. One thing for which the reader will search its pages in vain is, as Hobson points out in his preface, an explanation of why a system of production based on profit-making "expresses itself in a recurrent failure of demand to keep pace with supply." Nevertheless the book is exceedingly useful, particularly at the present time. Hyndman confined himself to an "historic account of these successive failures." He succeeds sufficiently well in his purpose for us to be able to agree with the statement, made in Hobson's preface, that "those who witness to-day in almost every trade and every country masses of idle workers facing idle machinery and untilled fields will be disposed to give close and serious consideration to Hyndman's declaration that 'the capitalist class has virtually declared its own inability to conduct the business of the community.'" In those words of Hyndman are summarised our case against capitalism, and our justification for urging the workers to become Socialists.

It is usual to hear the present crisis spoken of as being unique. It is explained as being due to reparations and war debt problems, the hoarding of gold by Central Banks, the failure of creditor countries to lend to debtor countries, and again in the same quarters as being caused by over-borrowing by debtor countries. Economic nationalism and the raising of tariff barriers are blamed to a greater or less extent. Finally, every explanation involves a reference to the stultifying effects on business of

the fall in prices. The explanations are as numerous as the suggested remedies, of which the most popular are those which aim at raising the price level through manipulation of the currency. In this group of proposals fall the suggestions for the introduction of bimetalism, managed paper currencies, and international monetary conferences. Only a slight knowledge of economic development during the past century is necessary to show that far from being a unique phenomenon, the present crisis is of the same kind as those of the past, and that the so-called "explanations" only repeat the explanations put forward by the men who lived through the crises of the nineteenth century. Further, the remedies now proposed merely represent a refurbishing of old ideas.

Certain unimportant characteristics of each crisis are, of course, particular to the crisis concerned, but in their broad outlines, all crises present the same features. The resemblance between one crisis and another even goes to the point of those who live through any particular crisis, imagining that it is something entirely different from anything that has gone before, and of those of them who advocate remedies always thinking that the adoption of their proposals will prevent the recurrence of crises in the future. But just as a war to end war only sows the seeds for another war, so the melting away of a crisis in a burst of renewed activity only prepares the way for the next crisis. Until that fact is clearly realised, the true cause of a crisis cannot be appreciated, for not until then will it be seen that the fundamental cause of all crises must be the same. This is to say that it must be a continually operating cause, and cannot be something, such as reparations or war debts, particular to the individual crisis. Such special factors may, of course, intensify a crisis when it comes, delay its solution or help to determine the time of its occurrence. Their responsibility for causing it cannot be carried further than that.

Crises are inherent in the capitalist system of production owing to the fact that production is based on the principle of profit-making, not on that of satisfying needs. Goods are produced in order to be sold at a profit. When trade is booming productive capacity is extended in order to increase the opportunities to make profits. New plant is installed, new sources of supplies of raw materials are opened up to enable the output of finished products to be increased.

Competition between producers to secure the lion's share of the profitable markets leads to production being extended further and further. Finally a point is reached when the supply exceeds the demand. Markets are glutted. Production has to be curtailed, first in one sphere and then gradually in others. Prices fall as stocks are unloaded. Workers are dismissed, and as their wages cease the demand for commodities further declines. The spiral is then leading downwards to business stagnation, bankruptcies and widespread unemployment. The boom has dissolved into a depression. There is a crisis. Then in time stocks run off, there are a number of bankruptcies, demand revives, and the mad dance through the figures of boom and slump goes on again.

This is a brief description of the course and cause of all crises. Any attempt to explain or deal with a crisis that ignores the profit-making basis of capitalism ignores essentials, and can only deal with what are, more or less, irrelevancies. Once it is realised that crises arise because the object of production is the making of profit, all remedies, such as those for currency reform, of which so much is now heard, must be dismissed as futile. As they fail to take account of the fundamental cause, they cannot hope to prevent its operation in the future, whatever temporary relief they may afford. The only means by which economic crises, such as the present, can be permanently banished from the world is by the overthrowing of capitalism. Until the present system of society is superseded by one from which profit-making has been eliminated, crises will, and must, occur periodically.

A study of past crises by revealing the correspondence in events between them and the present crisis will help to put the popular explanations and suggested remedies for to-day's depression in their proper perspective and to demonstrate the truth of the assertion made above that crises are inherent in the capitalist system of production. Here it is impossible to consider the crises of the past in detail. That has been done by Hyndman, and readers are recommended to study what he has written on the subject. Certain features of past crises will, however, be discussed so that the similarity between present and past events may be demonstrated.

Before doing this, however, it is worth referring to one aspect of economic crises

which is too frequently overlooked. To appreciate the real significance of an economic crisis it is essential to realise that what takes place in a time of crisis over the whole business field and in several countries is taking place continuously locally and in particular spheres of business. In some industry or place, plant, workers, and commodities are always proving to be redundant, as the supply of the particular commodity outruns the demand. It is when this condition becomes general and pronounced that the disease is glorified with the title of crisis and the general manifestation is treated as some rare event.

B. S.

(To be continued.)

## THE OUTLOOK FOR SOCIALISM IN RUSSIA.

A correspondent questions our attitude towards the Russian Bolsheviks on the ground that we are wrong in ruling out the possibility and probability of Socialism developing in Russia from the existing conditions.

A first objection to our correspondent's view is that it is an illusion to suppose that Socialism can be established nationally. Socialism is not a means of solving national problems of production in industrially backward areas. It is the solution to the international conflict between the working class and the capitalist class.

Our correspondent supports his contention by arguing that

(1) Production is advancing at a phenomenal rate. (2) Soviet capitalism has characteristics of a novel order. (3) The ruthless and sweeping social policies of the Communists must have compelled an interest in social affairs phenomenal for so backward a people.

As evidence, he quotes Michael Farbman's statement in the "New Republic" (September 16th, 1931), that while "immediately before the world depression, even the United States rate of annual increment was no more than 4 per cent. . . . the rate of annual increment in Soviet Russia in the first two years of the Plan's operation averaged 24 per cent."

This argument leaves out of account the initial backwardness of Russian industry. Expressed as a percentage the development from a relatively low level will appear to be very rapid, although the actual amount of the increase is small compared with the productivity of more advanced countries.



During the year following the abandonment of so-called "Military Communism" and the introduction of the new Economic Policy, the rate of increase was 34 per cent., far exceeding anything that has been achieved since (Grinko "Five Year Plan," p. 34).

The restoration of the pre-war level of production in Russia took ten years, approximately. On pp. 35-36 Grinko speaks of "the failure to restore the iron industry to even nearly the pre-war level, and its lagging far behind the growth of machine construction and the general requirements of the national economy," and "the considerable deficiency of grain production." According to the "Economic Handbook of Soviet Russia, 1931" (published by the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce), the yield per acre on the collective farms was no higher in 1930 than in 1927, in spite of enormous increases in the total acreage and in the average size of the collective farms, plus machinery, fertilisers, etc. On page 8 we read: "The progress of agriculture has not been as rapid as that of industry. After having approached in 1926 the pre-war level as far as sown area and production of principal crops are concerned, agriculture failed until this year to show further progress commensurate with the growing demands of industry for agricultural raw materials and of the population for foodstuffs." Recent reports show that in many industries the 1931 production plans failed to be realised. In view of these facts, we would suggest to our correspondent that it is far too early to speak of Russia having solved the problem of production; nor does this appear feasible apart from foreign aid. Grinko ("Five Year Plan," p. 117) speaks of "the ever-widening stream of technical assistance from the world's largest industrial concerns." This assistance is financed, for a profit, by the world's capitalists.

Regarding argument (2), our correspondent asserts as a fact that in Russia "80 per cent. of industry is under centralised control." He does not quote his authority, but if we accept the statement as correct, he exaggerates its importance. Maurice Dobb, in his "Russian Economic Developments" (p. 337), quotes J. M. Keynes to the effect "that two-thirds of the capital in large-scale undertakings in Britain was in enterprises of a State capitalist character, i.e., enterprises either in State hands or subject to some form of State regulation

and control" (Liberal Summer School, July 30th, 1927). No advanced capitalist country is run on the "individualistic" principles so dear to the heart of some early nineteenth century economists and philosophers. The joint-stock companies, the combines and public utility corporations, together with numerous Acts of Parliament, have changed all that. The capitalist class organise to an increasing extent upon collective lines. What, if anything, distinguishes Russian methods is bureaucracy, regarded by many observers as baneful. As Prof. Hoover puts it in his "Economic Life in Soviet Russia" (p. 10): "The elaborate machinery which is set up to prevent graft is, however, one cause of the immense amount of bureaucracy and red tape which weighs down the entire Soviet economy." Dobb, also, describes at length this aspect of the situation in his last chapter.

Our correspondent denies that capital in Russia is concentrated in the hands of a capitalist class. "Most of the capital," he says, "belongs to the State." What is this State which is "independent" of the property-owning class? He does not tell us, but its essentially capitalist nature was made clear by no less an authority than Lenin. "In view of the cultural and technical backwardness of Russia the solution of the economic problem could not be reached without learning from the capitalists and also using them as advisers, experts, managers, even as independent entrepreneurs" (quoted by Dobb on p. 162).

In Russia, embryo capitalists (euphemistically known as "specialists"), receive a State-guaranteed income of 500-600 roubles (£50 to £60) per month. The highest category of workers' wages (including administrators and highly-skilled technicians) is 225 roubles (£22 10s.) per month (Dobb, p. 340). The usual run of workers' wages at the time Dobb wrote was less than 70 roubles (£7) per month (see Soviet Union Year Book, 1930, pp. 464-5).

Commenting on the incentives held out to specialists in Russia to run production, Prof. Hoover says (p. 8):—

These material advantages (better living quarters, opportunity for travel, use of cars, clubs, etc.) are better than those which accrue to the mass of the population and are the best which can be obtained under the circumstances.

Our correspondent discusses these increasing class distinctions as "trivial," and maintains that their disappearance involves

"a far less drastic change of outlook on the part of the workers" in Russia than elsewhere. We wish we could believe this. But our correspondent provides us with no evidence in support of such a view.

As for argument (3), the vast majority of the population of Russia are still peasants, in spite of industrial development. The attempt to organise them into collective farms has provoked various forms of active and passive resistance. That of the so-called "kulaks" is too well-known to need emphasis, and our correspondent himself admits it. Even more serious from the standpoint of the Soviet Government, however, is the type of resistance mentioned by the Moscow correspondent of the "New York Times" (November 4th, 1931):—

Many collective farms and some state farms chose to distribute their surplus grain, fodder and other products among their own workers rather than sell them to the State grain collectors.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD pointed out years ago that the peasants were not Socialists and would not produce for any other motive than their own use or profit except under compulsion. Recent reports in the Press indicate that wholesale arrests of Soviet grain agents have taken place (for "failing to fulfil the Plan"?) and we may expect to hear of further screws loose in the bureaucratic machinery of the Russian State.

Maurice Hindus, in "Humanity Up-rooted," points out that the peasants control the bread basket and are the backbone of the Red Army. They do not want Socialism, and are unlikely to want it until it has been established elsewhere. Their "interest in social affairs" shows every sign of taking the form of hostility to the Government which professes to speak in the name of Socialism and whose attempt to impose it from above has inevitably been a failure from the first. The activities of the Communists in Russia have cleared the way for the development of capitalism.

The workers in Russia or elsewhere cannot emancipate themselves simply by supporting the imposition of political disabilities upon the capitalists. They can do so only by organising consciously and politically as a class for the capture of the powers of government in order to convert the means of life into the common property of all.

For this Russia is yet very far from ripe. The Stalinist doctrine of "Socialism in

Russia Alone" is a fantastic Utopian myth, as harmful in its effects upon the minds of the workers as its kindred chimeras, the Fabians' "gradualism," the I.L.P.'s "Socialism In Our Time"—in fact, the entire outfits of opportunist reformers in Western Europe and America. E. B.

## THE

## POSITION OF THE WORKERS.

For many generations men's minds have turned to the problem of human happiness. Human misery has been so obvious that it was bound to re-act on the more sensitive and sympathetic, and the result has been many fantastic and impracticable utopias, from Plato's to Robert Owen's.

That these visionary projections have been fantastic and impracticable has been due, not to wilful misleading or lack of intelligence, but to the absence of economic and historical knowledge of the social system.

It is only in quite recent times that social development and scientific research have given us the knowledge which was requisite to enable mankind to proceed with understanding to the establishment of a social system in which the furtherance of human happiness and well-being will be the common object of all effort.

Armed with this knowledge, the founders of the Socialist Party of Great Britain set themselves to form an organisation which would serve the revolutionary purpose. The works of scientists like Marx and Engels, and Lewis Morgan, have shown them

1. That society evolves;
2. That society evolves by revolution (at all events, in historical times);
3. That these revolutions are always the conscious work of a revolutionary class.

History shows that every class which has acquired ruling power has been revolutionary in its time, but no class has been revolutionary twice. The rising revolutionary class strives to wrest control from the ruling class, succeeds, and, in the nature of things, consolidates its position and strains every nerve to maintain the new social base which has given it power. Immediately it becomes reactionary.

In the course of time the means of production outgrow the conditions imposed by the existing social structure, a new revolutionary class arises whose interest is to set



up a new social order. There is a class struggle terminating in another social revolution.

Capitalism was enabled to displace Feudalism because the latter was based on the control of the land, which was only part of the means of production—the most important part at one time, it is true. But there was another form of wealth outside the control of the feudal nobility—merchants' wealth, and later manufacturers' wealth. Those who possessed this wealth, the capitalists, achieved their revolution, and are now a reactionary class.

Up to the present, each class that has conquered power has brought with it the seeds of its own destruction, because each has depended for its existence upon the exploitation of another group within itself, that only became a separate and distinct class after the successful outcome of the revolution.

But under capitalism productive property is controlled by the capitalist class. There is no other class of property owners to kick against their rule. It is impossible for the rulers to become the conscious agents of their own overthrow—and only *conscious* agents can establish the revolution, because, though a system can be destroyed without its destruction being consciously aimed at, the setting up of a new one—the other half of the revolutionary process—presupposes conscious effort. Who then are to be the agents of the revolution that will achieve Socialism? The only class that is left to carry out the revolution is the working class.

But in order to fit themselves for this task the workers must acquire the consciousness which can alone enable them to do so. This consciousness must comprise, first of all, a knowledge of their class position. They must realise that, while they produce all wealth, their share of it can never, under the present system, be more than sufficient to enable them to reproduce their efficiency as wealth producers; in other words, it can never exceed their cost of subsistence. They must realise also that, under the system, they will remain subject to all the misery of unemployment, the anxiety of the threat of unemployment, and the cares of poverty. They must understand next, the implications of their position—that the only hope of any real betterment of their condition lies in abolishing the social

system which reduces them to being mere sellers of their labour-power, to be exploited by the capitalists.

They will see then that, since this involves dispossessing the master class of the means through which alone the exploitation of labour-power can be achieved, there must necessarily be a struggle between the two classes—the one to maintain the present system of private ownership of the means of living, and the other to wrest such ownership from them, and make these things the property of society as a whole. This is the struggle of a dominant class to maintain its position of exploitation on the one hand, and of an enslaved and exploited class to obtain its emancipation on the other. It is a class struggle.

A class which understands all this is class-conscious. It has only to find the means and the methods by which to proceed, in order to become the fit instrument of the revolution.

In every social system the people who produce the wealth by which society lives have a very definite position in that society. Thus the chattel slave was a commodity—a mere piece of property, bought and sold. It was himself, and not his labour-power, which was sold. His position was that of, say, a horse.

The modern worker, on the other hand, is not property. It is not himself, but his labour-power, which is the commodity. He is the machine which produces the labour-power. Like all machines, he is subject to wear and tear; and like all machines nothing can be got out of him that is not put in.

On the other hand, just as every mechanism must justify its existence by being more economical than the next lower grade of appliance, so the human machine has to produce the greatest return for what is put into it, because it also has its competitors.

These competitors are machinery and methods. The dearer labour-power is, the more rapidly machinery and improved methods advance; and the more rapidly these advance, the greater is the number of unemployed serving to depress wages. The result of the operation of these conflicting forces is that labour-power sells for the cost of its production, or, as it is sometimes put, wages gravitate around the level of subsistence.

We now come to the point which presents the difficulty. To say that wages equal subsistence level by no means explains what

determines that subsistence level, and we are well aware that the standard of living varies considerably in different capitalist countries, to say nothing of those which are not completely capitalistic. Why is not the level of subsistence lower or higher? Why is it just where it is?

All other commodities sell, on the average, after variations have cancelled one another, at prices which depend upon their value. The value of a commodity is the labour time necessary to its production. Hence commodities exchange in a ratio according to the labour time necessary to produce them.

This result is assured by the fluidity of capital. Capital is invested in the most profitable directions. Where prices are below a certain point, other things being equal, profits are lower. Capital is then transferred to the production of those classes of commodities whose prices are higher and which therefore show a larger profit. On this account the increased production of the high priced goods brings such an extra quantity of them on the market that their prices tend to fall. This corrects the production of both the high-priced and the low-priced goods, and through that corrects the prices.

But the wage worker cannot convert his means of production (food, etc.) into the production of some other commodity than labour-power. True, he will endeavour to scramble into those trades which pay best, but this does not get him far.

The truth is that capitalism itself sets the standard of living of its workers to meet its own requirements. Capitalists have been compelled to educate the workers because they need an educated working class. Education, in its turn, gives the workers other needs, and though it does not give the means of satisfying those needs, the needs themselves form an additional inducement to struggle for the means to satisfy them. To create needs is to add them to the standard of living, and therefore to increase the wage which must be struggled for.

On the other side, if wages rise above the normal standard (as they do in times of "trade boom") there is a tendency to resort more to machinery and improved methods, which mean greater intensity of exploitation and more unemployed. Actually, many employers are discovering that a higher standard of living is necessary to enable the workers to stand the greater exhaustion of more intense exploitation.

It may be affirmed that every level of subsistence of the working class has its own intensity of exploitation, its own ratio of unemployment, and that, therefore, whether the standard of living is a little higher or a little lower, in the long run the quality of labour-power required by capital is produced at its lowest cost, and is sold for that cost. Hence the position of the workers is the hopeless one that they must always struggle to maintain their wages at subsistence level, but that they cannot do more. All the vast and wonderful improvements in the productive processes which mean such stupendous wealth for the owners, mean only more intensive conditions for the workers. They can have no share in it. All the reforms and all the philanthropy cannot touch this position. Remove the unemployed to-day, to-morrow machinery will have produced them again. Give the workers free houses or free bread—they must struggle just as hard for the remainder of their necessities.

Attempts at reform, therefore, are useless. They are defeated by the very operation of the economic laws of our competitive system.

As a matter of fact, capitalism is always being reformed. Reforms are the red-herring by which the capitalists keep the workers on the wrong scent. Reforms and palliatives keep the wage-slaves running from Tweedledum to Tweedledee and from Tweedledee to Tweedledum. And when, after much fighting, each reform or palliative is gained, it is only such as is necessary to keep capitalism safe for capitalists.

A. E. J.

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**The Socialist Standard**

JULY,



1932

**ABOUT OURSELVES.**

The present world depression is like all the depressions that have gone before in the effect it is having on the workers and their organisations. During a depression events move fast, and opinions are quickly changed when adversity stimulates interest in political and economic theories. Capitalism during its crises presents its more deadly aspects, and the most optimistic exponents of the "getting better and better" type of self-deception become apologetic and admit that there is something amiss. It is then that the Labour parties have their testing time. And how they have fallen! The world is strewn with the debris of reform programmes and reform parties.

In this universal destruction of jerry-built political parties, the truths of Socialism come into their own. The Socialist Party of Great Britain has in consequence enjoyed a period of relatively splendid expansion. We had a record influx of members in 1931. The sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD have increased steadily and encouragingly during the past two years. More interest is shown in our case, as is evidence by the attendance at meetings and the inquiries we receive. Interest has not only grown in amount but has extended to new foreign fields where in the past we have been unknown or ignored. We have found a bigger demand for pamphlets. In short,

we have every reason to congratulate ourselves on the increasing effect of our propaganda.

We are, however, well aware, that our expanded activities are only the expansion of a very small effort. What we can do is so far tragically small in relation to the vast problem of converting the working-class to Socialism. Events tend in our direction, but the difficulty of getting our attitude to the workers is only a little less than it was: it is still very great. The disturbance caused by the crisis and by the discovery that the old theories were worthless has a double effect. It sets men's minds in a ferment, but it calls forth increased activity from the hosts of political quacks who formerly shouted their wares in obscurity. A glance over the shelves of book-shops which cater for working-class students of politics will show that the present period is like the crisis of ten years ago in respect of the multiplicity of groups and propaganda papers seeking to attract interest in untenable theories—land-taxers, bimetallists, inflationists of all degrees and kinds, anarchists, direct actionists, and peculiar religions and philosophies without number. The depression helps us, but it also plagues us with this swarm of freaks, frauds and cranks.

We are doing what we can to seize whatever advantage the opportunity offers. In September, when the new year begins for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, we are producing it with a somewhat larger page and are making improvements in its appearance. We are publishing this month a pamphlet which will help to fill a big gap in our propaganda. We have developed our advertising in order to get at workers to whom formerly we were unknown. That is our contribution. Now what of yours?

The larger SOCIALIST STANDARD will involve a considerable increase in expenditure. In a comparatively short period we have gained 1,500 new readers. If you will help us to gain as many more, that will pay for the extra outlay. We also need to reprint other pamphlets. A 20,000 edition of "Socialism" is nearly exhausted, and will need re-printing. Other pamphlets are either out of print or nearly so. If we are to make the most of the present favourable situation we need money urgently. We ask all our readers to do their utmost during the coming summer propaganda months to

extend the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD and our pamphlets, and those who can to help us with donations.

**THE PROPOSED SOCIALIST PARTY OF INDIA.**

Those responsible for a movement to form the "Socialist Party of India" have issued a Declaration of Policy (published by the "Advocate of India" Press, Bombay).

It begins with a short statement of the position of the workers in the capitalist system of society. This opening statement is in the main accurate and simple, and only a few faults can be found with it. It states, for example, that the capitalists are there "controlling the principal instrumentalities of production and exchange," but it does not bring out with sufficient clearness and emphasis that the ownership and control by the capitalists of the means of production and distribution is the basis of the capitalist economic system, and that through their ownership and control the capitalists are the owners of the whole of the products of the workers' labour. Any misunderstanding of these essentials may cause a failure to realise that the aim of the workers should be to dispossess the capitalists of the means of production and distribution and to make these the property of society as a whole.

A second fault is that the statement gives the impression that the Socialist case is addressed only to part of the working class, i.e., not to the clerical, technical and so-called professional sections of the working class. In view of the frequent assertion by the opponents of Socialism that its appeal is to "manual" workers only, a declaration of policy should carefully avoid possible ambiguity.

The first part of the Declaration recognises that it is the abolition, not the reform of, capitalism that should be aimed at.

The more industry is rationalised the more the capitalist system is perfected, the worse become its resultant evils. It is not by any reform of the existing economic order, but only by the substitution of a radically different one that they are to be ended.

But having stated this, the Declaration then proceeds to make a case for a programme of "immediate demands." We entirely agree that the workers should use trade-union organisation to resist the encroachments of the employers, but it is essential that the workers should realise the

limited value of such activity. It is not a service to the workers to foster quite illusory hopes of considerable betterment to be achieved thereby. Although the expansion and technical development of capitalist industry in India will doubtless lead to the employment of better-educated and better-trained workers, and consequently to a higher standard of living, trade-union organisation will not be able to give the workers security under capitalism, nor can it prevent a worsening of their position relative to that of the capitalist class.

And the case for trade-union organisation is not also a case for the adoption of a programme of immediate demands by a party claiming to be Socialist. Nor is it a case for supporting the Co-operative Movement.

As the drafters of this Declaration could learn from the more advanced capitalist countries, every party which has adopted immediate demands under the impression that it can do so "while keeping its ultimate purpose always in mind and clearly proclaiming it on all occasions" has failed to do the latter. In every case, sooner or later, the supporters recruited for the immediate demands have swamped the ultimate purpose. This is inevitable. The fight for the immediate demands alters the composition of the organisation, destroys the clear grasp of Socialist principles, leaves no time or energy for necessary study, and introduces the disintegrating forces of careerism, opportunism, and the desire to become the Government at all costs.

The Co-operative Movement is another form of activity which is of negligible use to the working class, and is a hindrance to Socialist propaganda. At most it serves its members as a somewhat expensive method of saving. Genuine co-operative societies (in which the members themselves carry on the work and own and share in common), have invariably failed to make headway against the forces of capitalism. The so-called consumers' co-operatives which have made headway possess no real element of co-operation. They are merely joint stock capitalist trading concerns owned by small investors and exploiting their employees like capitalist concerns in general. The outlook engendered by the Co-operative Movement is no more favourable to Socialist propaganda than is the outlook of non-co-operators. Support of such blind-alley activities confuses the minds of



the workers by making them think that the social problem can be solved within capitalism and without Socialism.

Another grave objection to this Declaration is the intention of joining the Labour and Socialist International. That organisation is composed of parties (like the British Labour Party) which are utterly lacking in Socialist understanding and purpose. The International is in no real sense either Socialist or international. It tolerates the most shameful alliances with capitalist parties and governments, and its recent attitude of taking sides in the Chino-Japanese conflict shows that it is as lacking in an understanding of the logical Socialist attitude toward capitalist wars as it was when rabid nationalism overwhelmed it in 1914.

It is good to see that Indian workers are taking a serious interest in Socialism, but it will be regrettable if the proposed new party ignores the lessons to be learned from working-class history in Western Europe, Australia and elsewhere, and commits itself to a policy which will inevitably promote reformism at the expense of Socialist elements within it, and will prevent it from being a Socialist party except in name.

H.

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## THE NEED TO CONTROL PARLIAMENT.

A correspondent (Mr. W. T. Birch, London, S.E.22) objects to what he (mistakenly) regards as our view on fighting elections.

He quotes from a publication called "From Slavery to Freedom" a passage which he gives as follows:—

(1) Of serious import is the declared policy of the S.P.G.B. organ to run candidates in non-socialist constituencies provided the money is forthcoming. This policy has possibilities too dangerous for Socialists to entertain. A Socialist elected by non-Socialists "willing to give him a chance," or for his personality, is a party to a fraud against the working-class. Such an individual would not be an empowered delegate, but would be more unsavoury than an honest reformist.

Mr. Birch then adds his comments:—

That this charge is correct I know, because I remember the reference in the SOCIALIST STANDARD; and if my details are correct, the constituency considered was Battersea. Now it is well known that, unfortunately, only a mere handful of Socialists (I mean real revolutionary Socialists, not people who call themselves such) are to be found in any constituency. Suppose your candidate had been elected if he had run for Battersea, and there is the chance that he may have been. He certainly could not have gone to the House of Commons and said that he represented, say, 10,000 people who understood Socialism and were prepared to substitute this system for Capitalism. I repeat that your candidate might have been elected if he had run. People vote from all sorts of motives. Some are "fed-up" with their present member, others like the personality of a candidate, etc. I doubt, however, if there are enough real Socialists in the country to get a single man into Parliament, if they could be collected into one constituency.

(2) And what could the member do in the House? Put the Socialist position before the M.P.s? They already know it, and the newspapers would not publish the speech. Far better to do propaganda work outside. Under Capitalism a man can only go to the House of Commons to help to administer Capitalism, and to talk about voting on the merits and demerits of legislation introduced into a capitalistic legislative chamber is sheer reformist nonsense; and if the candidate himself were to introduce Socialistic measures (say a Bill declaring the land and everything on it and in it to be communal property) he would be doing something for which he had no real mandate from his constituents.

(3) Perhaps, however, the Socialist Party of Great Britain no longer holds such a policy. If so, it would be well to have an assurance to this effect.

(For convenience of reply we have numbered the paragraphs in Mr. Birch's letter.—Ed., Comm.).

## Reply.

(1) Mr. Birch quotes a passage referring to ourselves, and "remembers" that certain statements were made in the SOCIALIST STANDARD without, however, referring to the issue in which they appeared or saying what those statements were. This is not surprising. No statements were made bearing the slightest resemblance to those ascribed to us by Mr. Birch. Anyone who reads Mr. Birch's letter, without knowing the facts, will assume that we put forward candidates intending to get them returned on a non-Socialist programme and on non-Socialist votes. The truth is far different. What we proposed in 1928 was to do in the Parliamentary elections what from the formation of the party we had done in local elections, that is, put forward candidates for the propaganda value of that action, knowing full well that they could not possibly be elected.

Mr. Birch says that he read our statement about the candidate we proposed to put forward in Battersea. If he would consult the SOCIALIST STANDARD of February, 1928, he would see that we made plain something which would be already known to every reader of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, viz., that our candidate would run on the Socialist programme, seeking a mandate for the establishment of Socialism and nothing else. Yet in face of this Mr. Birch affects to believe that our candidate might have been elected by the non-Socialist majority of South Battersea electors. We can only say that we are appalled by the ignorance of electors and elections exhibited by Mr. Birch. He asks us to believe that only "personality" stands between victory and defeat for the capitalists at election times, and that electors who are in favour of capitalism are always liable when "fed-up" to vote against capitalism. Mr. Birch gives no evidence for his belief, but the matter can be quite easily tested. Will Mr. Birch give us a few instances of elections where voters who wanted capitalism voted against the various reformist candidates, and voted for candidates running simply on the Socialist programme.

And if Mr. Birch is still convinced that non-Socialists are always liable to vote for what they do not want and against what they do want, will he tell us how he proposes that we should guard against this except by our invariable precaution of putting forward a candidate simply on the Socialist programme?

One other point in the passage Mr. Birch quotes is the reference to money. Are we to understand that Mr. Birch objects to us asking our sympathisers to contribute towards the expense of carrying on the activities for which the party exists? (Having read the statement in the February, 1928, SOCIALIST STANDARD, Mr. Birch will remember that the appeal was addressed to our sympathisers.)

(2) In this paragraph of his letter Mr. Birch implies his opposition to the Socialist Party of Great Britain's policy of gaining control of Parliament. May we ask Mr. Birch in what way he imagines that Socialism can be established without the workers gaining control of Parliament and the rest of political machinery?

Mr. Birch tells us that the newspapers would not record the doings of Socialists in Parliament. How does he know this? Why does he suppose that the newspapers which already to a limited extent report our propaganda activities would cease to do so as soon as Socialists are numerous enough to win elections? And what of it, anyway? It is necessary for the workers to control the political machinery irrespective of whether the Press cares to report it.

Mr. Birch tells us that we should do propaganda work outside Parliament. Does Mr. Birch really imagine that the working class can overthrow capitalism while leaving the capitalists in control of Parliament merely by doing propaganda work outside. This is anarchism with a vengeance.

We cannot follow Mr. Birch's statement that candidates of ours put forward for the purpose of establishing Socialism would, if elected, have "no real mandate" from the electors.

(3) In his third paragraph Mr. Birch asks if we have now abandoned the policy which he describes. If he means have we abandoned the policy of capturing the political machinery in favour of the anarchistic policy of only doing propaganda work outside and leaving the political machinery in the hands of the capitalists, the answer is NO.

If he means our policy of fighting elections for their propaganda value even when there is only a minority of Socialists, and therefore no possibility of a Socialist candidate being elected, and if he means our policy of running candidates simply on the need to overthrow capitalism and establish



Socialism through control of the political machinery, our answer is again NO!

May we recommend to Mr. Birch that he read again the statement in the February, 1928, SOCIALIST STANDARD that he read once before but has failed to remember?

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

### THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE TO REFORMS.

Two correspondents (A. T. Delman, Los Angeles, and a reader in London, E.C.1) ask us to explain our attitude and Marx's attitude towards reforms. The two letters and our reply are given below.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrades:

The following is Marx's introduction to the French Labour Party Programme of 1880. This appeared in the Proletarian Opposition Bulletin of Chicago, Illinois, Number 3, January, 1932, and is a translation from the "Elementarbucher des Kommunismus"—Wage, Labour and Capital—Berlin, 1930, page 67, and "Marx-Engels Program Critiques"—same series as before, pages 69 and 70. These works are published by the German Communist Party.

Whereas:—

The emancipation of the productive classes is that of all mankind, regardless of differences of sex;

The producers can be free only to the degree in which they control the means of production;

There are only two forms under which they can possess the means of production;

1. The individual form which never existed as a general condition and is being more and more eliminated by the advance of industry;

2. The collective form, whose material and intellectual elements are being perfected by capitalist society's own evolution;

Whereas:—

Collective appropriation can be achieved only through the revolutionary action of the class of producers, or the proletariat organised as a separate political party;

Such organisation must be effected with all the means at the disposal of the proletariat, inclusive of the right of universal suffrage, so that the ballot may be changed from the means of deception it has been until now into an instrument of emancipation.

The French socialist workers, proclaiming the aim of regaining all means of production to collective ownership have decided, as a means of organisation and of conflict, to enter the election campaign with the following demands:

#### (A) POLITICAL DEMANDS.

1.—Abolition of all laws against the press, associations and unions, and particularly of the law against the international association of

the workers. Abolition of the work book, this degrading insignia of the working class, as well as the laws which place the worker in relation to the employer and woman in relation to man in a subordinate position.

2.—Elimination of all budget appropriations to the church and return of the property (known as the "dead Hand") to the state of all mobile and immobile property belonging to the religious societies (decree of the Commune of April 2nd, 1871), including all industrial and commercial properties of these societies.

3.—Abolition of the state debt.

4.—Abolition of the standing army and general military conscription.

5.—The Communes shall be granted home rule and their own police.

#### (B) ECONOMIC DEMANDS.

1.—A weekly day of rest, or a law that will prohibit employers to operate more than six days out of seven. Legal limitation of the daily hours of labour to eight for adults. Abolition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age in private places of employment and a reduction of the hours of labour to six for those between the ages of fourteen to eighteen.

2.—Protection of apprentices in the form of control through the labour unions.

3.—A definite minimum wage which shall be determined annually through a statistical labour commission in accordance with the prices of necessities prevailing in the given communities.

4.—A law which shall prohibit the employers to hire foreign workers at wages lower than those demanded by French workers.

5.—Equal wages for both sexes performing the same work.

6.—Education and vocational training of all children who shall be supported by the community through the state and the commune.

7.—Support of the aged and those unable to work by the community.

8.—Prohibition of all interference by employers in the administration of labour mutual aid banks, insurance, etc., which shall be entrusted to the exclusive directions of the workers.

9.—Responsibility of employers in case of accident through deposit of a bond which the employer has to pay to the labour banks and which shall be adjusted in accordance with the number of workers employed in an enterprise, and to the degree of danger connected with activity in such enterprise.

10.—The right of objection by workers to the special labour rules in the various places of work, prohibition of the privilege assumed by employers to penalise their workers in the form of fines or wage reductions (decree of the Commune, April 27th, 1871).

11.—Abolition of all contracts in which public property is entrusted to others (such as banks, railroads, mines, etc.) and transfer of all state places of employment to the workers employed therein.

12.—Abolition of all indirect taxes and change of direct taxes into a progressive income tax on all incomes over 3,000 francs, prohibition of inheritance in the indirect line, and of all direct inheritances amounting to more than 20,000 francs.

Taken in its broad aspect the revolutionary method as held by the S.P.G.B. is unalterably opposed to reforms or palliatives as confusing and obscuring the class conflict.

The S.P.G.B. maintains that—

1. Reforms deal with effects.
2. Further entrench capitalism.
3. Lead to compromise and bargaining with capitalist parties and candidates.
4. Nothing short of Socialism can cure existing evils.

How does the S.P.G.B. reconcile its revolutionary method to Marx's advocacy of these Political and Economic demands "as a means of organisation and of conflict, to enter the election campaign"?

Yours fraternally,

A. T. DELMAN.

\* \* \*

The second letter reads as follows:—

Dear Comrade,

I see in the "Communist Manifesto" that Engels, in his preface, writes:—

As I write these lines, the proletariat of Europe and of America is holding a review of its forces; it is mobilised for the first time as One army, marching forward under One flag, and fighting for One immediate aim:—Eight-hour working day, established by legal enactment (as was demanded by the Geneva Congress of the International Working men's Association, and again by the International Socialist Congress held at Paris in 1889).

("Communist Manifesto," Engels' Preface, written in 1890. E. & C. Paul's translation. Published, Modern Books, Ltd., 1929.)

The S.P.G.B. is opposed to fighting for reforms on the political field, yet here we see Engels advocating an "eight-hour day."

Do not the above quotations show that the S.P.G.B. is at variance with Marx & Engels.

Yours, etc.,

London, E.C.1.

#### Reply.

The translation of the programme adopted in 1880 by the French organisation "Le Parti ouvrier" does not fully agree with the original, doubtless due to its having been translated first into German and then into English. The original is reproduced on page 261 of Paul Louis' "Histoire du Socialisme en France" (published in 1925 by Marcel Riviere, Paris). While the version quoted by our correspondent is substantially accurate, several phrases are omitted, some words are mistranslated, and in some passages the English wording is not clear. For reasons of space we cannot reproduce the whole programme here, but one or two mistakes are worth correcting.

In the opening sentence the original reads "productive class," not "productive classes," and "differences of sex" should read "differences of sex or race." The original gives a list of kinds of means of production ("land, factories, ships, banks, credit, etc."). The sentence immediately preceding "A. Political Demands" should read "with the following immediate demands," not "with the following demands."

Clause 4 under "Political Demands" should read "general arming of the people," not "general military conscription."

The precise part played by Marx and Engels in drafting it is not clear, although it is evident that they did have a hand in it. Paul Louis, in the work referred to above, says (page 261), "The programme was the result of the collaboration of Guesde and Lafargue with Marx and Engels." In a letter dated 7th May, 1932, Louis writes, "It is impossible to fix exactly the part that Marx took in drawing up the manifesto of the Parti Ouvrier in 1880. One knows only that he collaborated with Engels, Guesde and Lafargue."

B. G. De Montgomery, in his "British and Continental Labour Policy" (Kegan Paul, London, 1922, page 12) says that Guesde came to London to confer with Marx and Engels. Montgomery says that this programme was "worked out after the so-called Gotha programme, which was adopted in 1875 by the German Social Democracy."

Ryazanov, in his "Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels" (Martin Lawrence, London, 1927), says (p. 211) that Marx "was taking an active part in the working out of the programme." Ryazanov also says that this 1880 programme of the French Party served as the pattern for the subsequent programmes of the Russians and the Austrians, and as a pattern for the later German "Erfurt Programme," and that a book in which it was elaborated ("What the Social Democrats Want") exercised a great influence on the Russian Movement.

One thing that has to be remembered is that Marx and Engels were prepared on occasion to compromise in order to secure agreement which they thought would help on the Socialist movement. They accepted statements with which they disagreed in order to secure general agreement on a programme of whose main points they ap-



proved. Ryazanov, in his "Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels," tells how this happened in connection with the constitution of the International Working Men's Association (See Chapter VIII). Consequently the knowledge that Marx and Engels were consulted about the programme of the French Party in 1880 does not necessarily mean that they approved of all of it.

Having now cleared the ground we can come to the point which our correspondents raise. They find that the S.P.G.B., which claims to be a Marxist organisation, does not issue a programme of immediate demands and does not fight for reforms on the political field. Yet Marx and Engels associated themselves with programmes of immediate demands.

The first point to notice is that the S.P.G.B. holds precisely the same view as Marx and Engels on the need to abolish Capitalism and establish Socialism. In the preamble to the French Party's programme the statement that the French Socialist workers "have decided as a means of organisation and of struggle to enter the elections with the following immediate demands," is preceded by the declaration that "the object of their efforts" was "the political and economic expropriation of the capitalist class and the restoration of all the means of production to collective ownership" (Louis, page 261). It is important to notice that this attitude is not that of the various reformist parties which wish to retain capitalism while improving it with reforms. These parties are not seeking power to expropriate the capitalist class and institute social ownership of the means of production. They make reforms the object of their activities, while the drafters of the French programme were entering the elections with the programme of immediate demands "as a means of organisation and of struggle."

That was the view in 1880 of those who drafted the programme in question. It is not the view of the S.P.G.B. Experience has taught the lesson that programmes of immediate demands do not serve as a means of organising socialist parties. They serve as a sure means of destroying socialist unity, of thrusting the socialist objective into the background, and of attracting into the organisation non-socialist elements which drag it into the mire of compromise and bargaining with capitalist parties. Every one of the capitalist countries pro-

vides its examples of parties whose original socialist aims have been submerged and their organisation disrupted in this way. The French 1880 programme is a case in point. The party which adopted it did not last for a year. Within 12 months one wing, which wanted to work through the existing political groups, broke away and formed the "Alliance Socialiste Republicaine." Another wing, composed of Anarchists, renounced Socialism entirely. The third group, the majority, formed the "Parti Ouvrier Socialiste Revolutionnaire."

And within another year this latter party broke up further into "possibilists" and "impossibilists." (See Bliss, "A Handbook of Socialism." Swan Sonnenschein, 1907, p. 76.)

So much for the immediate demands which were intended to be a means of "organisation." Other countries provide similar examples. Reference was made above to Ryazanov's statement about the 1880 French programme having served as a pattern for parties in Germany, Austria and Russia. Where now are these parties which were to fight for Socialism on this programme? With the exception of the Bolshevik wing of the Russian Party, and minorities in the German and Austrian parties, they all of them developed before 1914 into parties of reform and nothing else, parties of political bargaining, parties of war supporters. History has proved the danger of building a party on such a basis.

The S.P.G.B., in declining to put forward a programme of immediate demands, does not take up the untenable position that the position of the workers under Capitalism is such that they could not be worse off if they gave up the struggle to defend their wages and working conditions; nor do we maintain that reforms are valueless. What we do maintain is that reform programmes inevitably attract reformists, and produce reformist organisations incapable of working for Socialism; that only by working directly for Socialism will it be achieved; that parties lacking solid socialist support and depending on reformists cannot achieve Socialism even if they obtain control of the political machinery; that reforms cannot end the subject-position of the working class although they may be of small temporary or sectional benefit; that the small value of the reforms obtainable by reformist political action is in no way commensurate with the years of work and the volume of effort re-

quired to achieve them; and that incidentally the capitalists will give concessions more readily in an endeavour to keep the workers away from a growing socialist movement than they will in response to the appeals of bodies based on programmes of reforms.

Does it follow from this that we believe Marx and Engels to have been wrong? The answer is that Marx and Engels, even after discovering the main laws of social development, still had to learn by experience how best to apply their knowledge to the practical tasks of working-class organisation. They never ceased to clarify their views and change them whenever experience showed the need for a change. As Engels states in his 1891 preface to "Wage-Labour and Capital," all of Marx's writings which were published before the first part of his Critique of Political Economy differ from those published afterwards, and "contain expressions and even entire sentences, which from the point of view of his later writing, appear rather ambiguous and even untrue." (See "The Essentials of Marx," published by the Vanguard Press, New York, 1926, p. 71.) This was because Marx had studied further and learned more. Among the early ideas which Marx and Engels abandoned in later life was the idea of armed revolt. Experience taught them the futility of "barri-cades."

We have learned from the endeavours of Marx and Engels, and are only proceeding in accordance with their fundamental ideas when we point out that experience has also shown the danger and uselessness of programmes of immediate demands.

ED. COMM.

## PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

Value, Price and Profit—K. Marx. 6d. Post free, 7d.

Socialism, Utopian and Scientific—F. Engels. 6d. Post free, 7d.

Causes of Belief in God—P. Lafargue. 3d. Post free, 4d.

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Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

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Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7), where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

## NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Owing to pressure on space many answers to correspondents have had to be held over.

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Sunday</b>    | ... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m.<br>Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m.<br>Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 6 p.m.<br>Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.<br>Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m.<br>Clapham Common, 6 p.m.<br>Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.<br>Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m.<br>Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.<br>Leyton, Whipps Cross Corner, 7.30 p.m.<br>Dagenham, Becontree Ave. Road, near "Robin Hood," 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. alternately, commencing July 3rd |
| <b>Monday</b>    | ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.<br>Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.<br>Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.<br>Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | ... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.<br>Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.<br>Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball," Cambridge Road, E., 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Friday</b>    | ... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m.<br>Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Saturday</b>  | ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.<br>Paragon Road, Hackney, 8 p.m.   |



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2 Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.
- EAST LONDON.**—Communications to W. Thompson, 34, Queen Anne Road, E9. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.
- ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 67, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.
- ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop, Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 15, Percy Road, E.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.
- NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10.
- SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Secretary, A. Scott, 13, Wulfric Place, Manor Estate.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33 Ernest St., E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.
- TOOTING.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in month at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garra Lane, Tooting opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 336. Vol. 28.]

LONDON, AUGUST, 1932.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## IS IT A NEW I.L.P.?

At the end of July, too late for comment in this issue, the Independent Labour Party held a Conference to decide whether it would disaffiliate from the Labour Party. Those of its leaders who favoured this course claimed, in advance, that a decision in that direction was a foregone conclusion. The National Administrative Council accordingly prepared what is intended to be the new constitution and programme of the party. The opponents of a breakaway made their preparations for carrying on a separate organisation inside the Labour Party.

The situation is deserving of some attention, for it enables us to measure the emptiness of nearly 40 years of I.L.P. propaganda in Great Britain.

The I.L.P. was formed in 1893, with the professed intention of winning the workers away from Liberalism and of promoting independent political action, with Socialism as the ultimate aim. The method was to be that of reforming the capitalist system little by little—the policy which later became known as “gradualism.” Seven years afterwards the I.L.P. took a prominent part in forming the Labour Representation Committee, which, in 1906, became the Labour Party. At the inaugural meeting of the Labour Representation Committee the I.L.P. delegates moved, and the meeting adopted, a resolution which laid down the lines on which the Labour Party has conducted its activities during the following 30 years—the policy of bartering its professed independence in return for social reforms. The resolution favoured the establishment of “a distinct Labour group in Parliament, who shall have their own whips and agree upon their policy, which must embrace a readiness to co-operate with any party

which, for the time being, may be engaged in promoting legislation in the direct interest of labour . . . .”

This was the policy on which the Labour Party was founded. It is a policy which has permitted all of the political bargaining, the vote-catching, and the open and secret pacts with the Liberals for which the Labour Party has been and is notorious. It is this policy which some members of the I.L.P. in recent years have condemned. Let it not be forgotten, then, that it was the I.L.P. delegation, including Keir Hardie, which moved the original resolution on which this unsavoury policy was based. Mr. Maxton, who did not protest at the time, now (*New Leader*, July 15th, 1932) condemns the Labour Party for having taken office in 1929, on the tacit acceptance of the condition laid down by Mr. Lloyd George that he would support them in Parliament only so long as they kept clear of Socialism. Mr. Maxton cannot, however, deny that the Labour Party in 1929 was doing precisely what, in the beginning, the I.L.P. had proposed that they should do, i.e., they were co-operating with the Liberals in order to push through some reform legislation.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, right from its commencement, attacked the policy of political bargaining. We held then, as we do now, that a Socialist Party must be independent and must be based on the demand for Socialism, not on a programme of reforms to be obtained by co-operating with capitalist parties. The recognition by a large number of members of the I.L.P., that the gradualist policy has failed is, therefore, in fact, a recognition that the I.L.P. has been wrong all these years and that the S.P.G.B. has been right.

In view of this it is impudent of the I.L.P.



to claim, as they do, that their proposed new programme and policy are intended to appeal "to all Socialists who realise the necessity for a break with the past and a new approach to the future" (*New Leader*, July 1st, 1932). It is not Socialists who have to break with their past. On the contrary, the convulsions from which the I.L.P. now suffers are a tardy sign that Socialists have been right. It is the I.L.P., not the S.P.G.B., that needs to consider fundamental changes in its basis. That such a change has to be discussed is due to the fact that hitherto the I.L.P. has been in no respect a socialist party.

One curious admission made by the Secretary of the I.L.P., Mr. John Paton, deserves to be placed on record. For years it was a standing complaint of the I.L.P., continually hurled against the Socialist Party of Great Britain, that our Declaration of Principles is too rigid. Socialist principles, they said, could not be reduced to hard and fast formulas. There must be flexibility and constant adaptation to changing circumstances. This was the "principle" under cover of which they justified the issue of new vote-catching programmes whenever the old reforms had become unpopular, or had been filched by the Liberals or Tories. The I.L.P. were entirely wrong on this point. The basis of capitalism does not change from day to day in the manner supposed by them.

Given a real understanding of the capitalist system, it was not impossible to frame scientific principles as the permanent basis of a Socialist Party. The S.P.G.B. did this in 1904, and the events of the ensuing quarter of a century have proved these principles to be sound and not too rigid. The I.L.P. is at last making some approach to a recognition of this. Mr. Paton writes as follows:—

A new Constitution is also being submitted to the Conference by the N.A.C. The basis of it was accepted by the Blackpool Conference in a general statement, and the new document incorporates in proper form the decisions then taken. The Constitution, in both thought and expression, marks a definite break with the traditional outlook of the I.L.P. Its basis is definitely Marxist, and it embodies the new thought and spirit with which the I.L.P. is surging as a reaction to the changed conditions in which the Party is operating.

In drafting this new statement, the N.A.C. has kept clearly in view that such a document should be, in the main, a statement of the permanent principles and objectives of the Party, containing only the unavoidable minimum of

topical reference, in the "Programme," which forms part of it. The Constitution, therefore, is not concerned with argument as such, nor with internal Party organisation and activity, but seeks to express the body of more or less fixed doctrine within the I.L.P.—(*New Leader*, July 15th, 1932.)

But in spite of the claim that the new constitution is to be a Socialist one, and a clean break with the I.L.P.'s past, there is nothing to indicate that the new I.L.P. is fundamentally different from the old.

The breakaway was not demanded on the ground of a basic disagreement with the Labour Party, but only on the ground that the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party are unacceptable. In spite of criticisms of particular items in the Labour Party's programme, the I.L.P., as a body, has repeatedly shown its approval of the programme as a whole, and urged the workers to support it. Even at the last General Election, in October, 1931, the I.L.P. allowed its members, including members of its National Administrative Council, to fight as Labour candidates, on the Labour programme. And even those members who fought as independent I.L.P. candidates, put forward election programmes packed with the same old reformist absurdities.

A more recent case in point will show how little change and how little increase of understanding there is. At recent elections in Manitoba the I.L.P. ran candidates, five of whom were elected. This is the comment of the British *New Leader* (July 15th):

In Winnipeg, John Queen, the I.L.P. leader, polled 9,337, the largest Socialist vote ever recorded. John MacLean, the I.L.P. Mayor of Winnipeg, was only defeated by 117 votes in the Conservative stronghold of Assiniboia.

It is not suggested that the I.L.P. in Great Britain is responsible for the actions of the I.L.P. in Canada. What is asserted is that the Canadian I.L.P. ran on the usual reformist programme, and that this was known to the British I.L.P. when they congratulated the successful candidates and claimed that the vote given to them was a Socialist vote. In the issue of the *New Leader*, which published the note of congratulation, is an article by Miss Jennie Lee, describing the Canadian I.L.P. as "broadly similar to ours in Great Britain," and recording a joint conference recently held by the Canadian I.L.P. and the Independent Farmers' Party, "both agreeing that at the next Provincial general elections they ought to fight on a common platform." This joint

programme consists of a demand for nationalisation of the land, public ownership and control of railways, telegraphs, etc., control of currency and credit, and numerous other similar harmful and blind-alley reforms of capitalism. Miss Jennie Lee calls this joint conference "a promising political development," yet she admits that it is probably true that "one really profitable harvest would knock the bottom out of whatever Socialist sentiment exists among the farmers of the West."

In other words, Miss Jennie Lee and the Editor of the *New Leader*, in spite of the alleged break with their past, are prepared to endorse the old policy of looking for pacts and alliances with any non-socialist organisation willing to back a vote-catching programme of reforms.

In fact, the I.L.P. candidates in Manitoba did not receive or seek Socialist votes. They ran on a reform programme, and that one of their candidates who got most votes (John Queen) in fact received a large number of votes from Conservatives.

The *Winnipeg Tribune* (quoted in O.B.U. Bulletin, June 23rd) reported the Deputy Returning Officer as saying that hundreds of voters who gave their first vote to the Conservative (Evans) gave their second vote to Queen, and vice versa. There were scores of ballot papers on which the voter gave his first vote to Queen and all his other votes to Conservative candidates. (The election was run on a system of Proportional Representation, each voter having several votes.) The *Tribune* expressed the view that personal popularity played a large part in getting Conservative votes for some I.L.P. candidates, but not for others.

It is this success which the British I.L.P. claims to be a victory for Socialism!

Actually there was one candidate who stood for Socialism and nothing else, the candidate of the Socialist Party of Canada. His vote, 859, is an indication of the small degree of socialist knowledge in Winnipeg, and Winnipeg is in that respect just like Great Britain.

Because the number of Socialists is so far very small, a political party cannot adhere to Socialist principles and at the same time secure popularity, seats in Parliament, a large membership, and large funds. There is not the slightest chance that the Maxtons and Brockways of the I.L.P. will drop reformism and adopt a Socialist programme,

since to do so would mean sacrificing Parliamentary seats, donations from wealthy non-socialist individuals and organisations, and the limelight in which they have been accustomed to move.

The fact is that the I.L.P. was, is, and will remain an organisation lacking an understanding of Socialism, and utterly incapable of making any real advance towards it. It deserves nothing but the unrelenting hostility of the workers, whatever the name under which it may masquerade.

H.

## SOCIALISTS AND WAR.

Boris Souvarine (a French ex-Communist), writing in *La Critique Sociale* (March, 1932, published at 31, rue Jacob, Paris, price 5 francs), maintains that there has been a fundamental, if unobserved change in the attitude of Socialists towards war during the past 25 years.

Taking the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) as an illustration, Souvarine says that most of the Socialists "declared themselves on the side of Japan, less by reason of sympathy for a superior civilisation than out of hatred for Czarism, and, above all, because they anticipated that the defeat of Russia would have beneficial results for the international Socialist movement." He quotes Jules Guesde as having said: "We must be against Russia and for Japan. Long live Japan!"

Kautsky, who took the same view wrote: "Never in my opinion has a problem been set in such simple terms."

Franz Mehring went into the question rather more deeply. He differentiated between what he called the "policy of neutrality of the workers," and the "policy of neutrality of the capitalists." In his view the workers "have little cause to wax enthusiastic for either Japan or for Russia, but it is not a matter of indifference to them whether Japan or Russia wins." He argued that a Japanese victory would be in the interests of the Socialist movement.

Plekhanov approved of this point of view. The Russian Party (including Lenin's group) hoped for the defeat of Russia, and the Russian Poles actually sent Pilsudsky to Japan to mark their support of that country against their own Government.

Edouard Vaillant, while anxious that the Western countries should not be involved,



looked to the victory of Japan to lead to an immediate revolution in Russia.

Vandervelde thought similarly, and said there was no room for hesitation—"Czarism is the enemy."

Souvarine quotes Hyndman as holding the view that War in itself is a factor in progress:—

I do not share the opinion of Jean Jaures and some others of our friends who wish to prevent war between Japan and Russia. This war seemed to me inevitable and all my Russian friends, Social-democrats and Social Revolutionaries, have said the same thing, namely, that whether Russia is victor or vanquished, a revolution in Russia will certainly follow.

(This passage is not the original, but is re-translated into English from Souvarine's French version).

He hailed Japan for having "helped to deliver the whole Western world from a shameful oppression."

Souvarine remarks that, although there was a general tendency to support Japan against Russia, yet there was conflict of opinion as well as confusion of thought among the groups whose spokesmen are referred to above. In particular, Souvarine instances the different standpoints of Mehring and Hyndman.

Going back still further, Souvarine argues that even the confused views of 1904 were an advance on the attitude of many Socialists during earlier war crises.

In 1885, when war threatened between Russia and England, Jules Guesde openly welcomed it. In his opinion, a Russian defeat would lead to a proletarian victory in Germany, "a working class 1789," and a British defeat would mean a universal upheaval, with the British workers at its head. In an article entitled "Long Live War," he prophesied the immediate overthrow of capitalism whichever way the war might end. To him, war was a "fertiliser of progress," and the God of Battles was an ally of the Socialist Movement. As Souvarine quite rightly points out, it was this sort of reasoning that led Guesde to welcome the war of 1914 on the ground that it would "give birth to revolution."

Souvarine traces the Bolsheviks' attitude towards war back to Kautsky, from whom, he says, Lenin derived his views. Extensive quotations are given from a pre-war, but undated, article written by Kautsky. Briefly the argument is as follows:

Socialists are not bound to support defensive wars and oppose offensive wars,

any more than they should renounce the class struggle. However much we may dislike war, we cannot prevent this appeal to violence on the part of rival capitalist groups. The working class cannot repudiate all use of force, and therefore they cannot repudiate war. We must judge the policy which leads to war, but not war itself.

Souvarine claims that Lenin's writings in 1914, particularly an "Open Letter to Souvarine," contained arguments identical with Kautsky's. Souvarine says:—

There is no doubt that Lenin borrowed from Kautsky the best of his reasoning. Both of them paraphrased the dictum of Clausewitz that "war is a continuation of policy by other means," . . . and agree in affirming that there is not always cause for condemning even offensive wars. In support of this contention that socialists may support an offensive war, Kautsky instances the view of Marx and Engels, in 1848, that it was necessary for Germany to wage an offensive war on Russia, and their efforts later on to stir up English public opinion for war against Russia. (This was the Crimean War.)

Souvarine quotes Plekhanoff as saying: "The international working class, faithful to its revolutionary point of view, must approve of every war—whether of defence or of conquest—which promises to remove an important obstacle on the road to revolution."

After his survey of the pronouncements made by these leaders of various schools of thought, Souvarine claims that the present attitude of Communists and the Labour Parties, of demanding "disarmament," the "outlawry of war," and "pacts of non-aggression," represents a definite break with the views of those who have claimed to speak for the working class in the past. (He does not mention the demand made by the "Labour and Socialist International," that the League of Nations, the Governments, and the Trade Unions should take action against Japan on account of the "aggression" in Manchuria and other Chinese territories.)

Finally, Souvarine urges the workers to clarify their minds on the problem, so that they may take up a realistic attitude in future.

#### OUR VIEWS ON THE PROBLEM.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD who have acquainted themselves with the S.P.G.B.'s attitude towards war will see that not one of the views mentioned by Souvarine is identical with ours. Nor is it true that our view has changed with the years. Articles in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD at the

time of the Russo-Japanese war show the S.P.G.B.'s attitude then to be essentially the same as in 1914 and now (see, for example, the issues for July and August, 1905). The writers at that time cherished certain illusions about the French and German so-called Socialists and their attitude towards war, and about the likely outcome of the Russo-Japanese conflict, but they fully understood the fundamental point that the workers have no interest in supporting wars between capitalist States. When it is remembered that the S.P.G.B. was at that time a newly formed party, clarifying its attitude on various questions of policy, it is remarkable that the question of war should have been understood as clearly as it was.

The S.P.G.B.'s view can best be explained by taking up points referred to by Souvarine.

We do not distinguish between "offensive" and "defensive" wars. In truth, no real distinction is possible. Let those who believe such distinctions to be practicable answer these questions:—Can a Government which pleads the necessity of war to defend its territory be denied the right to conduct operations outside its borders? Could the English Government in 1914, before the declaration of war, allow the German Fleet in the Channel? Could Germany refrain from 'defending' itself by occupying Belgium? Could the Allies trouble about the neutrality of Greece when they needed Salonika as a base against Bulgaria and Turkey? If defense and offense appeared to be separable half a century ago, the changing technique of war has made it difficult to-day. An obvious defence against air attack is to strike against the air base of the other side. Any Government can put up a plausible case to show that its military offensive is needed to defend "vital national interests."

And what—in a capitalist world—is a "war of conquest"? Germany in 1914 pleaded the necessity of war to prevent encirclement and extinction. Germany demanded colonies. Was Germany guilty of "aggression" when she demanded colonies, and the other Powers, which had already seized the best colonial lands, not guilty of "aggression"? Capitalist Japan needs the natural resources of Manchuria, and Japan's steps to seize Manchuria fall into the same category as Germany's gamble in 1914. In other words, "aggression" is

merely the name applied to the actions of the late-comers by those who were first to collar the loot.

The S.P.G.B. does not attempt to distinguish between the relative merits of the conduct of capitalist Governments at war with each other. We recognise as a fact that they are all of them defending by armed force the private ownership of the world's means of production and distribution, i.e., forcibly excluding the mass of the population from entering into possession. Should the slaves take sides when the slave-owners fall out? Obviously, no.

There remains the Guesde-Lenin-Kautsky argument that wars, or some of them at least, are "progressive" in their effects and lead on to revolution. We repudiate this argument that certain wars should be supported by the workers because of their supposed revolutionary effects. First of all, there is the suffering for the workers which war brings in its train—both to combatants and civilians. Then there is the war fever and political repression which make Socialist propaganda more difficult. Then it will be observed that the Russo-Japanese War did not result in the overthrow of Czarism. The progressive effect of war and defeat has been misunderstood. War may speed up the development of industry and may produce disturbed conditions leading to the overthrow of Governments. In countries where democratic methods of electing and changing the Government have not yet developed, this possible result of defeat may appear to possess considerable importance. But the defeats in the Great War which hastened political changes in Germany, Russia, Austria, and elsewhere, did not lead to Socialism. What was overlooked by those who put forward the argument was that the overthrow of a throne or an autocratic Government cannot possibly lead to Socialism where the working class are not fit to take on that task. In other words, their view on this aspect of war was different from that of the S.P.G.B. because their view on the conditions for achieving Socialism was different. Experience has taught us something it had not at that time taught them. They (and this includes Marx and Engels in their earlier years) had underestimated the extent of the knowledge and experience required to build up a solid and reliable Socialist political organisation out of the unorganised workers. To them, the overthrow of an autocracy was but a step



removed from the conquest of power by the working class. The lessons of the past 100 years have shown how over-sanguine they were. Wars, revolutions, and ordinary economic and political evolution have destroyed numerous monarchies and autocracies, but because an organised Socialist working class nowhere exists, every attempt to gain power for Socialism has failed—including, of course, the Russian attempt.

The S.P.G.B. opposes working class participation in war between capitalist Governments for reasons based directly on working class interests and the interests of the Socialist Movement.

In all countries the workers are exploited by the owners of the means of production and distribution. There are no differences between the conditions under which exploitation is carried on in the different countries sufficient to make it worth the workers' while supporting war in order to defend their subjection to one national group of capitalists rather than to another. As a case in point, the new Manchurian Government (said to be a tool of Japan) in taking over the Posts and Customs from China, guarantees to the staffs exactly the same wages and conditions as before. Why should they worry who governs Manchuria while capitalism lasts?

Many people who recognise these facts, nevertheless argue in favour of supporting wars for national defence and to secure national independence on the ground that only in this way can the national question be thrust on one side. They argue that Socialists ought to help the Irish, Chinese, Indians and others to secure national independence as a means of clearing nationalistic prejudices out of the way. This is an illusion. Every support of nationalism feeds it and encourages it. Nationalism breeds conditions in which Socialist propaganda and organisation are made more difficult. The Irish Free State is not less nationalistic than it was ten years ago because it is now partly independent of England. England is not free from nationalism in spite of its hundreds of years of independence. Japan—whose own territory is under no threat—is at present going through a violent fever of nationalism. For Socialist propaganda to make headway, nationalistic prejudices have got to be struck at the roots, and that from the very beginning.

As a practical policy this means that

Socialists must carry on their struggle against the capitalist parties in their own country and must on no account allow it to appear, through political alliances or collaboration in capitalist Governments, that they associate themselves with their own capitalists against the rest of the world. It is only natural that the Labour Parties, believing as they do in associating with capitalist parties, should find themselves during war forming nationalist united fronts against the "enemy" country. There can be no sound Socialist attitude towards war except where there is a sound Socialist attitude towards capitalism at home.

The Great War showed how easy it was for the Governments to capture the so-called Labour and Socialist Parties. Germany provided a particularly interesting spectacle. The German Social Democratic Party had cherished the illusion that it was opposed to wars of aggression, and had also professed to abhor the methods of the Czarist Government in Russia. In August, 1914, the German Government was afraid that a war with France and England would not be popular with the Social Democrats and might be opposed by them. Here was a problem which the German Chancellor (Bethmann-Hollweg) and his advisers solved with the greatest ease by declaring war on Russia, thus giving the Social Democrats the kind of war their unsound theories would inevitably lead them to support. Prince von Buelow, in his Memoirs (Putnam, 1932, p. 163) describes the situation, and states that it was this motive which induced the Chancellor to hasten the declaration of war on Russia, for which otherwise there was no immediate cause. In "Class 1902" (Martin Secker, 1929), Ernst Glaeser describes from the point of view of a member of the Social Democratic Party how easily the trick worked.

In Japan, at the present time, the wave of nationalism that has swept over the Trade Unions and so-called Socialist Parties has been helped on by the Labour Parties in England and elsewhere through their endeavour to judge the "merits" of the disputants. By denouncing Japan as the aggressor, these parties have at once thrown themselves open to the suspicion of being pro-China and anti-Japan. The nationalist elements in the Japanese organisations have used this effectively to discredit the whole idea of internationalism and of Socialism. By being able to represent the foreign so-called

Socialists as helping capitalist interests hostile to Japanese capitalism, they have succeeded in overwhelming the working-class elements in Japan which have a clearer understanding of the position. Confidence between Socialists in the different countries requires as its first condition that each group shall show that its hands are clean in its activities at home. The Labour Parties can make no such claim and are rightly suspect in the eyes of the Japanese workers.

When Souvarine suggests that there is need for a revision of theories about war held by the Labour and Communist Parties, he is right. But what is really needed is that they should undertake the fundamental revision required to bring their theories as a whole into line with the facts of capitalism and the lessons of experience. H.

### SOCIAL CONTRASTS

It is sometimes amusing, when temporarily relaxing from the stern realities of the struggle for existence, to notice the care taken by our masters for our moral welfare. This is exemplified by the recent warning of the Board of Film Censors to the film industry on the subject of "daring" films. Leaving aside the question of what are desirable or undesirable films, the warning in question is an example of the arrogance of the master class in claiming to decide what is good for us.

Commenting upon this in the "News-Chronicle" of 18/2/32, E. A. Baughan says:—

Indeed, one could wish it were possible that the Board of Censors extended its veto and banned those films, mainly of American origin, which show how the wealthy classes waste their money (to put it at the lowest) in senseless orgies. What kind of effect must these pictures have on men and women who have the greatest difficulty in buying the necessities of existence?

Thus we are not only to be deprived of any temptation to forsake the straight path of virtue, but we may even be deprived of witnessing at secondhand the manner in which our masters enjoy their leisure, for fear it might make us just a wee bit jealous.

However, the cogs of capitalism are such that these little secrets are continually coming our way, and in the "News-Chronicle" of 20/4/31 there is an interesting description of the new Dorchester Hotel in Park Lane, where the cheapest room is 35s. a day. We learn that

not even a film advertisement writer could find superlatives sufficient to express the exquisite

sumptuousness of the dearest suite at £15 a day or £105 a week. . . . There are eighty salons, Turkish baths for women, and a number of slimming rooms and beauty parlours.

It is interesting to contrast the comparative comfort of such a hotel as this with the lives of the unemployed existing on a dole which Judge Parsons at the Bristol County Court said was "barely sufficient to keep body and soul together."

So far, Africa and China have been comparatively free from these extraordinary contrasts in the modes of existence of the two different classes constituting capitalist society, but in the "Daily Telegraph" of 2/8/30 the Marquis of Lothian, secretary of the Rhodes Trust, was reported as saying that

the industrial age was going to sweep through Africa and Asia in the same way as it had in England and America. Nothing on earth could prevent Asia and Africa from having their countryside filled with great smoking factories, thundering railways, filling stations, popular newspapers, and the whole paraphernalia of Western civilisation.

We will add a little prophecy of our own to these remarks, namely, that an understanding of the principles of Socialism will have spread even more rapidly, and that we shall be nearer still to the goal of Socialism.

R. M.

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**The Socialist Standard**

AUGUST,



1932

**THE GERMAN SITUATION.**

The problem that concerns capitalists in general is freedom to accumulate profits without economic or political hindrance either from economic conditions or from dissatisfied workers and impecunious sections of their own class. In each country each section of the capitalist class seeks to gain the lion's share of the wealth plundered from the workers. The International interests of groups (large trusts for instance) again cut across these other interests and produce further complications.

On the main issue there is unity, but on sectional issues there is conflict. Hence the divergent policies which at one time and another throw up alleged representative men and which provide professional politicians with a fruitful field to build up ephemeral reputations and fortunes.

Germany is at present torn with internal strife produced by the class conflict of wage-worker and capitalist, complicated by the minor clashing of capitalist national and international sectional interests. The general dissatisfaction has been increased by the ineptitude and wavering policy of the Social Democratic Party which has tried to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Since the end of the war this party and its supporters have sought to hold power by means of compromises and alliances; at one time crushing the workers at another fighting

mock battles with the capitalists. In the end it has reaped the contempt of the capitalists and the distrust of the workers.

The war and post-war conditions gave an added impetus to the complete industrialisation of Germany and converted the old land-owners (Junkers) into modern agricultural capitalists. These together with the industrial capitalists who serve agriculture, and the Bankers and Traders are the interests behind Von Papen. Prussia is the centre of these interests and contains roughly two-thirds of the total population of Germany. Heavy industry (coal, iron and steel) centres in South Germany and has strong international connections and interests which demand stable government, the curbing of workers aspirations, and an "enlightened" policy abroad.

The bureaucracy in Germany is very highly developed and positions in it are the object of and the bait for the small investors and shop-keeping sections together with the families of the old army officers. Hitler appeals particularly to these groups and also to disillusioned workers.

There is much in the Hitler movement that directly serves the interests of the German capitalists but there is an element of disorder and incapacity in it that inspires them with doubt. Hence from the beginning they have distrusted it and alternately given it support and withdrawn their support from it according to their immediate interests and ideas. In other words it has and will be used only where it serves the interests of those who control the means of wealth production, etc., in Germany.

Underneath all the above mentioned groups is a large and dissatisfied working class, with low wages, hard conditions and an unemployed section numbering over six millions.

For some time, prominence in the news has been given to the growth of the Hitler movement and to the clash between it and the Catholics, Social Democrats and Communists. On July 20th the situation took a dramatic turn when President Hindenburg appointed the German Chancellor, Von Papen, to be Commissioner of Prussia, and dismissed the Prussian Government which was a coalition of the Social-Democrats with the Catholic Centre Party. A very important result of this move was that it gave the Federal Government direct control of the Prussian

Police—a body almost as formidable as the army.

The Social-Democrats at once raised the cry that this was an attack on representative government, but they cannot dispute the fact that dissatisfaction with their own activities has robbed them of much of their support among the workers, and has made Hitler's party the largest in Germany. At the Prussian elections in April, 1932, the votes cast for Hitler's party totalled 8,000,000 as compared with 4,670,000 for the Social-Democrats and 3,370,000 for the next largest party, the Centre Party. Similarly, the fact that Hindenburg was able to use the Presidential powers specified in Article 48 of the German Constitution and dismiss the Prussian Government was due to his having been elected by the German voters in April. He was elected with the unqualified support of the Social-Democrats and the Centre Party.

The Presidential elections clearly illustrate the uselessness of the Social-Democrats' policy of compromise and bargaining. In 1925 they withdrew their own presidential candidate and officially supported the Centre Party's candidate, Dr. Marx, an avowed anti-socialist, because they declared that it was imperative that the republic and democracy should be saved from the rival candidate, Hindenburg. They failed, and Hindenburg was elected.

At the next presidential election, in 1932, the Social Democrats and the Centre Party officially supported Hindenburg because they said that it was imperative that the republic and democracy should be saved from Hitler. This time the manoeuvre appeared to be successful in that the Social Democrats gave their votes to the man who topped the poll—Hindenburg. Now three months later they are indignantly protesting that the republic is being betrayed by Hindenburg.

The decline of the Social Democrats and the rise of Hitler is an evidence of the disrepute into which their crooked policy has brought them.

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**WHO ARE THE FATALISTS?**

In its issue of May 19th, the *Daily Worker* published, without dissent, a letter from a correspondent (C. I. H., Manchester), from which the following passages are taken:—

During our May Day Meeting I heard a local party speaker say that capitalism is responsible for the world economic crisis, but that the individual capitalist is not to blame.

In the May number of the revisionist Marxist (tea) party's paper, the *Socialist Standard*, the conclusion of an article on Kreuger states that he was a victim of the capitalist system.

This view is held by many workers and is a source of much confusion. . . . This philosophy of blind circumstance, somewhat similar to that of divine predestination, is the philosophy of mental and physical paralysis. . . . Where is the system?

The first paragraph quoted seems to indicate that the Communist Party possesses at least one intelligent speaker with some understanding of the nature of capitalism.

Let Karl Marx reply to the second paragraph:—

To prevent possible misunderstanding, a word. I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no sense couleur de rose. But here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and class interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history can, less than any other, make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them. (Preface to *Capital*, p.xix. Sonnenschein edition.)

From the third extract one gathers that the correspondent not only fails to understand the difference between Marxism and Calvinism, but that he is ignorant of facts known to most schoolboys.

Are we to regard the Puritan rebels of the seventeenth century (who regarded themselves as the predestined "servants of the Lord," wreaking his vengeance upon the unholy Cavaliers) as examples of paralysis? Were the fatalistic disciples of Mahomet, who overran Northern Africa and invaded Spain, samples of passivity? On the other hand, is the modern Pleasant Sunday Afternoon brother, who prates of his "free will" and tamely acquiesces in his exploitation by the capitalist, a fair specimen of virility?

True, under certain social conditions we do find fatalism associated with servile submissiveness to the will of the ruling class. Oriental countries offer numerous cases in



point; but this apparent contradiction illustrates in a forcible manner the principle that the political life of a given country or epoch can only be explained by reference to its stage of economic development, and not merely by its philosophy. The Puritan movement in England offers an admirable example of the way in which a class, forced to the surface by economic conditions, can revive antiquated ideas in order to express new needs, pouring new wine into old bottles, usually with disastrous results to the bottles.

Marx, however, was the product of a scientific age. People who ascribe their activity, or lack of it, to chance, fate or God, only show thereby that they do not understand the real forces which mould their conduct. It was the task of Marx to lay those forces bare and to show that the development of social life, like every other aspect of evolution, takes place according to certain discoverable laws. In particular, he demonstrated that the accumulation of capital follows a definite and inevitable course (inevitable, that is, in the sense that while it can be retarded or accelerated, it cannot be avoided), and that this accumulation has certain definite and equally inevitable results, including constantly recurring crises and intensified suffering for the workers.

Those workers who have grasped the teachings of Marx, however, are far from being blind creatures of circumstances. They are class-conscious; conscious, that is, of the class nature of the system which has made them what they are. They recognise the social character of the productive forces which has reduced the present system to an obsolete absurdity which can be swept away when the producers will it. As a result, they endeavour to co-operate with those social forces by persuading their fellow-workers to take the necessary political steps. They do not foolishly imagine (as does C. I. H.) that they can "fight the system by struggling against the conditions imposed by the individual capitalist." They know that the system is the cause of these conditions and that one does not get rid of causes by tinkering with effects.

The policy advocated by C. I. H., like that of all reformers (so-called Communists included), resembles that of individuals who, when faced with a house on fire, try to prevent the flames blistering the woodwork. They are just as blind as any fatalist in

their violent revolt against the effects of capitalism.

The basis of present-day society is the ownership of the means of living by the capitalists as a class. It is the class that holds the power; not a number of isolated individuals acting independently of one another. Capitalism survives as a system because it is organised. Communists, however, encourage the workers to fritter away their energies in sectional conflicts, thus reducing the ability of the workers to organise as a class for the establishment of a new system. They teach the workers to regard strikes as the weapon of their emancipation.

A hundred years or more of strikes have failed to shake the capitalist ownership of the means of living. They are necessary and useful from time to time as measures of defence against capitalists, but they do not, and cannot, alter the fact that the workers are compelled to go on producing profits in return for wages so long as the capitalist class retains its ownership of the land, factories, railways, etc.

The workers cannot gain possession of the factories by walking out of them, nor even by staying in, so long as the capitalist class controls the coercive forces of the State. The class struggle, therefore, necessarily assumes a political form. In the words of the declaration of principles of the Socialist Party: "The working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation."

This policy, consistently advocated by the S.P.G.B. for nearly a generation, is not that of fatalists or paralytics. It is the policy of those who understand their environment and adapt their efforts intelligently to it. It is no more blind than the attitude of the electrician or engineer who uses his knowledge as a tool to enable him to take advantage of a natural force instead of submitting himself to annihilation by it.

As for paralysis, nothing is more futile than the attempt to work miracles or to find a port by means of a weathercock. Nothing finally produces greater apathy than the expectation of the impossible; yet these are the characteristic attitudes prevalent in the Communist Party, whose leaders have affected, in the past, such hearty con-

tempt for patient study and organisation. Signs are not wanting that "ruthless self-criticism" is about to give way to reckless self-destruction. Morbid introspection generally leads to a fit of the blues!

E. B.

## THE CAPITALIST NEVER LEARNS.

(Continued from July issue.)

### THE CRISES OF 1929 AND 1873 COMPARED.

For the purpose of comparison with the present, the crisis of 1873 is probably the most interesting of the crises of the nineteenth century. It lasted for six years, from 1873 to 1879, and before it had run its course its effects had been felt in practically every country in the world. The period before 1873 had been one of enormous expansion everywhere. New developments in communications, due to railways, steamships and the telegraph cable, had opened up new areas, had created a demand for capital equipment of all kinds, and had revolutionised the production of foodstuffs. Immense increase in wealth and business activity resulted from these developments and from the introduction of limited liability, which fostered the founding of companies for every conceivable purpose. European countries, such as Germany and Russia, which had lagged behind in economic development, began to make rapid strides. Loans to Governments and the flotation of private companies enabled machinery, plant, etc., to be imported into developing countries. "Between 1860 and 1876, more than £320 million was raised in the London money market upon foreign Government loan issues. In the same period half as much again was raised upon the credit of the Governments of India and of other parts of the British Empire. £232 million was paid up in the same years on the shares and debentures of private companies engaged in railway building or other enterprises outside the British Isles." (See "The Migration of British Capital," by L. H. Jenks. Pub. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1927, page 280.) In every financial centre the values of securities, etc., soared. There seemed to be nothing that could hinder the growth of wealth, and industry and international finance seemed to have entered into the golden age.

Then, in May, 1873, the bubble burst in Vienna. Prices of securities had been run up by speculators on the Vienna Bourse, just as they had been on every other Stock Exchange in the world, and just as they were in Wall Street and elsewhere in the period preceding the crash in October, 1929. Finally, the speculation petered out and security prices tumbled more rapidly than they had risen. The consequence was, to quote Hyndman, "panic, chaos, wild despair, hopeless madness, collapse of confidence, complete crash in business." These terms are to be heard to-day when the effects of the Wall Street collapse of 1929 and the failure of the Credit Anstalt in Vienna last year are discussed.

The depression soon spread to the neighbouring European States. By September, 1873, America was in the throes of the severest crisis of its history. In U.S.A., from 1869 to 1873, there had been what Hyndman described as a "marvellous boom in West and East alike," owing to the rapid railway development that had taken place and the opening up of the West. Writing in 1892 of this period, Hyndman uses words which find an echo in the accounts of the boom in America that ended in 1929. He states:—

Those who have been in the United States at such times know the sensation of general well-being and universal progress which is felt throughout the country. Nowhere is a period of prosperity more suddenly and surely exhibited in the lives of the people . . . the whole nation thought itself on the full flow of continuous improvement. (p. 108.)

Finally the period of overbuilding of railways and rash financing came to an end. Half the railways fell into the hands of receivers, "banking house after banking house came down, and the New York Stock Exchange was closed, only opening again on 30th September. Great commercial and distributing houses were also obliged to suspend payments. Not a single industry remained unaffected by the collapse. There was a glut in every department of trade. From a third to a half of the workpeople in the Eastern States were said to be without employment. The number of actual "tramps" during the winters of 1873 and 1874 was placed as high as 3 millions out of a whole population of little over 40 millions. All prices were down and yet goods were unsaleable. Cotton, wheat, wool, lead, iron, steel, leather were all selling from 20 per cent. and more below



the prices they had fetched before the crisis" (pp. 116 and 117).

The likeness between the situation in the U.S.A. in 1873, as described by Hyndman in the sentences just quoted, and the situation to-day is sufficiently obvious for further comment to be unnecessary.

The 1873 crisis was not felt so acutely in England as in other countries, but this country did not escape unscathed. To the era of foreign financing that had preceded 1873 succeeded a period of insolvency and defaults. In this respect the history of the years 1927 to 1932 merely repeats that of the crisis half a century ago. In 1873 the bankers announced that the Honduras Government was in default.

Costa Rica, Santo Domingo and Paraguay defaulted in the same year . . . . To relieve a desperate financial situation in Spain and keep King Amadeus on the throne, bondholders consented to a funding of the portion of the interest then due. There was, in consequence, a heavy fall in Spanish stock, a collapse of credit, the abdication of King Amadeus, civil war and complete default in June, 1873. By this time foreign Government securities were tumbling madly downwards in price. . . . In November, 1873, the Bank Rate in London was at a minimum of 9 per cent. and the recession in stock prices began slowly to spread into industry and commerce. In the following year all South America became depressed as the currents of capital, which had moved to that region, ceased to flow. Then . . . . the suspension of interest payment by Bolivia, Guatemala, Liberia and Uruguay. Insolvency spread to Turkey, Egypt and Peru." (Jenks, pp. 291 and 292.)

Finally, in 1875, defaults on foreign loans had reached such a point that a House of Commons Committee was set up to inquire into the whole position. The revelations contained in its report find a counterpart in those now being made before an investigating committee sitting in America which is inquiring into the question of foreign lending during the 1927/8 boom.

One other aspect of the 1873 crisis in England is worth referring to, because the same features loom large to-day. The price index in 1873 stood at 111.

There now set in a fall which continued without interruption until a low point of 81 was reached in 1879 . . . . export values fell off dramatically, while quantities could, with difficulty, be increased. But there was more food, and more copper, and more iron and wool for which to pay. Great Britain did it out of the surplus which had formerly been available for foreign investment. For the twenty years ending in 1874, Great Britain had been exporting an average surplus of capital of about £15 million. She had done this in addition to re-investing abroad all of the earnings upon foreign invest-

ments already made. These, by the 'seventies, amounted to at least £50 million a year. At this time the surplus capital exports above this ran well over £30 million. Within the space of three years this item of the British balance of payments entirely disappeared and became, in fact, reversed. (Jenks, pp. 332/3.)

Jenks goes on to say that by 1876 Great Britain "could scarcely balance her requirements of food and raw materials with the manufactures she could export and the freights her merchant marine could collect. The export of a capital surplus was over." He estimates that Great Britain's capital surplus reached £56 million in 1872, and dwindled to £1½ million by 1875. From then until 1880 there was a deficit each year, amounting to £110 million for the five-year period. The deficit reached its peak of £38 million in 1877. When allowance is made for the expansion in wealth that has taken place since the 'seventies, these figures show that the "adverse balance of payments," of which we hear so much to-day from economists and politicians, is not in any way remarkable.

Before leaving the 1873 depression, let us see how, at the time, it was explained. A contemporary writer, quoted by W. T. Layton in his "Introduction to the Study of Prices," stated that the following causes were "generally regarded as having been especially potential":—

"Over-production," "the scarcity and appreciation of gold," "restrictions on the free course of commerce," through protective tariffs on the one hand, and excessive and unnatural competition caused by excessive foreign imports, contingent on the absence of "fair" trade, or protection on the other; heavy national losses occasioned by destructive wars; the continuation of excessive war expenditure; the unproductiveness of foreign loans and investments; excessive speculation and reaction from great inflations; . . . . a general improvidence of the working class.

The above "explanations" of the 1873 depression, which were current at that time, are identical with the popular attempts to explain the present depression. And yet we are told that the present depression is of a kind unknown to the past!

Given the time and the space, every single feature of the present crisis could be shown to have its counterpart in one or other of the crises of the nineteenth century. In 1931 the Bank of England borrowed from the Bank of France in order to protect the exchange value of sterling. It had done the same in 1839 and 1890. (See Andreade's "History of the Bank of England," p. 367.)

The financial manipulations of Kreuger recall those of Nicholas Biddle in the thirties of last century. (See Jenks, Chap. III.)

Finally, the remedies now proposed are the same as in the past. To-day we are told that if trade is to recover, prices must be raised, and that for this purpose recourse must be had to bi-metallism or to a managed currency, of gold or of paper. These panaceas for our ills are as old as the ills themselves. Bi-metallism was being advocated in 1817. It was resurrected frequently during subsequent crisis, particularly in 1896, when W. J. Bryan, candidate for the American Presidency, made his famous speech in which he declared: "You shall not press down upon the brow of labour this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold."

In 1817, also, proposals for a gold currency system, under which "money contracts should be 'corrected' by reference to a price index number," were put forward by Lowe and Thomas Attwood respectively. (See "Financial Reconstruction in England, 1815-1822," by A. W. Acworth. Pub. P. S. King & Son, Ltd., 1925, pp. 83-90.) The present schemes of our economists like J. M. Keynes represent little advance on these proposals of more than a century ago. They are of interest as showing how the present crisis lacks even the originality of provoking new proposals for its cure.

The foregoing only touches the fringe of the subject, but it may at least serve as a warning against unquestioning acceptance of the contention almost universally made that the present crisis is not part of the usual trade cycle, but is entirely different in kind from any crisis that has gone before. It may prevent those who stop to consider the matter, from being gulled into the belief that by currency manipulations and international conferences of politicians and business men a new era of permanent prosperity can be ushered in.

One further warning can, perhaps, usefully be given. It is frequently maintained that because commodity prices have fallen, because Governments and companies have defaulted, because investments in securities no longer yield the income they did three years ago and show a shrinkage in market value, and because established firms all over the world have failed, that the wealth of the world has diminished. In fact, the real wealth of the world to-day is greater than it was in 1929. It cannot be measured by

the prices of shares and securities on the Stock Exchange. When fundamentals are considered, it is seen to consist in the accumulation of consumable goods and equipment produced by the expenditure of labour in the past, and in the supply of labour available to operate and add to that equipment in the future. Changes in prices of commodities and securities have not reduced this real wealth. This assertion runs so counter to what is usually written and said on the subject, that it may be worth while quoting the view of an economist whose "orthodoxy" cannot be questioned. Professor T. E. Gregory, of London and Manchester Universities, has written:—

In so far as equipment and human labour continue to produce as fruitfully as before, society, as a whole, suffers no loss even if the market values of the securities representing the nominal value of the productive enterprises of the community undergo a decline, and society, as a whole, gains nothing if these securities rise in value. The real wealth of the U.S.A. was no greater as a result of the phenomenal rise in stock market values in 1928/9 and is no less because of the subsequent decline; for the real wealth of a country consists of the stream of goods and services which can be consumed and not of the nominal value of the securities issued by the enterprises producing these goods and services. (See *Outline of Modern Knowledge*. Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1931, page 651.)

That capitalism does not secure a satisfactory distribution of the products of industry at the best of times, and that it imposes aggravated suffering on the workers in its periodical crises of "over-production," is something that it is beyond the scope of the present article to discuss.

B. S.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Several answers to correspondents have had to be held over owing to pressure of space.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND.

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.



## UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE REMEDY.

An article in "John Bull" (May 21st, 1932), written by an unnamed managing director, states that, in answer to an advertisement for a clerk at £3 10s. per week, no less than 100,000 men applied for the job. The writer appeals to our sympathy for these unfortunates, and appears greatly troubled about it. In the softness of his heart and possibly his head, he would have liked to have written a sympathising reply in rejecting the 99,999 applicants, but an unsympathetic board will not allow the expense. He reveals the cause of the trouble. It is that office machinery can now do the work of a considerable number of men, and that cheaper female labour can be used to operate them. That is as far as the writer goes, and "John Bull," too, for that matter. It appears that on realising these painful facts one should shake one's head, murmur dear, dear, or something else appropriate, and speedily forget it.

But we do not forget it. We also remember a few more things, and we know the remedy.

The "Daily Herald" (January 15th, 1932), quoting from a report given to the Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance, states that 100,000 men and 3,000 women are continually unemployed, that this is the standing figure of unemployed insured persons. There are also, roughly, seven million people for whom employment is intermittent, although only serious among 10 per cent. We gather from this that there is serious unemployment and non-serious. Ordinary poverty and extraordinary poverty. One has ordinary poverty in work and extraordinary out of work. The "News-Chronicle" (June 13th, 1932), reports that there are nearly one and a fifth million people in receipt of Poor Law relief, which means acute poverty for them; so that's a third degree of poverty we can have. The "Daily Herald" (February 6th, 1932) quotes Mr. Smith, of the National Federation of Professional Workers, as saying:—"Non-manual workers receiving over £250 per year do not come under the Unemployment Insurance Acts and the plight of these people when thrown idle is often tragic." These are not included in the "Daily Herald's" figures, and there must be hundreds suffering privation of which nothing

is heard except when we read the reports in the papers of suicides directly due to financial worries. Harassed mothers of families die miserable deaths in the ever-handy gas oven rather than go on facing the day-to-day strain and worry of trying to close the gap between the ends that won't meet. Bankrupt business men throw themselves in front of the train that should have borne them home and which gives them instead the freedom from the worry that their overwrought nerves can no longer endure. Young lovers who should have been able to look forward to long years of happiness together end their lives rather than face the dreary vista of life living apart through lack of means to marry. These are facts taken from the daily newspapers quite recently and to which, one and all, the coroner monotonously chants, "Suicide whilst of unsound mind," instead of "Suicide owing to living in a system of society which puts profit before mankind's happiness."

Shall we also murmur "Dear, dear, how dreadful!" and forget, or shall we emulate the slogan-loving Prince of Wales and persuade everybody to buy and sell British, in the absurd belief that Britain can escape the general depression? Unfortunately the slogan is as ineffective as the ejaculation, because the cause of all this poverty and unhappiness, which is world-wide, is capitalism, which is also world-wide.

Capitalism is a system of society in which goods are produced in the first place solely for profit. A few people, the master class, own and control the land, factories, mines and everything which is used to produce wealth. The mass of the people, the workers, are propertyless and have to work for a master in order to get enough money to buy back from the owners the amount of goods which their earnings will cover. They are paid just enough to enable them to live according to the standard of life in which it has pleased God, etc. Thus a clerk's standard of comfort is different from a manager's, and from a farm labourer's; but all are workers, and all must sell their labour power in order to live. Even when the worker is in work he must be constantly fighting against reductions in pay. The "dole" is about the lowest amount that can be paid to a person to keep him alive, and employed workers must always be on the alert against being pushed nearer to that amount. Hence, even when a job is obtained it does not mean freedom

from worry and anxiety. Machinery has been developed to such an extent that goods can be produced much faster and in considerably greater quantities than they were years ago, when practically every available worker was used. The workers who have jobs have only sufficient to purchase little more than the actual necessities of life, and the unemployed have considerably less, so that their spending power is restricted, and we have the ridiculous position arising of millions of commodities having been produced which cannot be sold because millions of people haven't sufficient money to buy them. Quantities of goods which people need are destroyed so as not to flood the market. Factories remain idle, when there are men and women willing and anxious to work them, and prating fools preach false doctrines of economy when there is an abundance of everything. The economic evils of to-day are unnecessary, and those who talk of reforms and expedients for alleviating those evils are either babes or charlatans.

There is not one reform or measure, free trade, tariffs, shorter hours, birth control, that will get the workers out of their main difficulty or make capitalism a satisfactory system. The conditions are ripe for a change, and all that is lacking is the workers' understanding of the position and their determination to alter it. Socialism, the common ownership of the means and instruments for producing everything we need, is the only solution to the economic ills, and many others which are the outcome of these deeper troubles and which beset us on all sides. Socialism can only be brought about by Socialists, and our job is to make Socialists, so that we may put an end to this poverty in the midst of plenty and get the very best out of the few years of life that is our heritage in the æons of time that have gone and are yet to come.

Mrs. O.

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"And the end of the War finds cadgers for money for war memorials. War memorials! they are in hospital wards, in lunatic asylums, and in graveyards; they are in the hearts of widows and fatherless children, and 50,000 priests specially fitted and ordained for heaven, were exempted. Had they no faith in their Father? Would not his hand have spared them a clout on the head from a rifle butt, or a prod from the end of a bayonet? Would, not his hand have guided the shrieking shell away from their holy bodies? O ye of little faith! Would not the very lice have refused to nibble their precious skins? Would not the ravens have fed them? Their choice was the safety of the recruiting platform. If they were Men, they would have left the Church; if they were women, they would have dropped tears of warm compassion; as they were Priests, like their God, they did nothing."

(From "The Fourth Age," by William Repton, Pioneer Press, 61, Farringdon Street, 1s.)

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- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Sunday</b>    | ... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m.<br>Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m.<br>Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 6 p.m.<br>Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.<br>Finsbury Park, 3.30 p.m.<br>Clapham Common, 6 p.m.<br>Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.<br>Battersea, Princes Head, 11.30 a.m.<br>Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.<br>Leyton, Whipps Cross Corner, 7.30 p.m. |
| <b>Monday</b>    | ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.  |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | ... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.<br>Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.<br>Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m.<br>Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m.<br>Cooks Road, Kennington Park Road (by Kennington Theatre), 8 p.m.  |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | ... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.<br>Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.<br>Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball,"<br>Cambridge Road, E., 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Friday</b>    | ... Vallance Road, E., 8 p.m.<br>Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.  |
| <b>Saturday</b>  | ... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.<br>Paragon Road, Hackney, 8 p.m.  |



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burna Road.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2 Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to W. Thompson, 34, Queen Anne Road, E9. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room), Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14½ Graham Road Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, 1th Metropole Communications to Sec., at 6½, Ampleforth Grove, Witherby Road.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Rd., E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Sec., A. Bentley, 31, Claremont Road, W.9.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33 Ernest St., E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in month at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garra Lane, Tooting opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., W. MEHEW, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

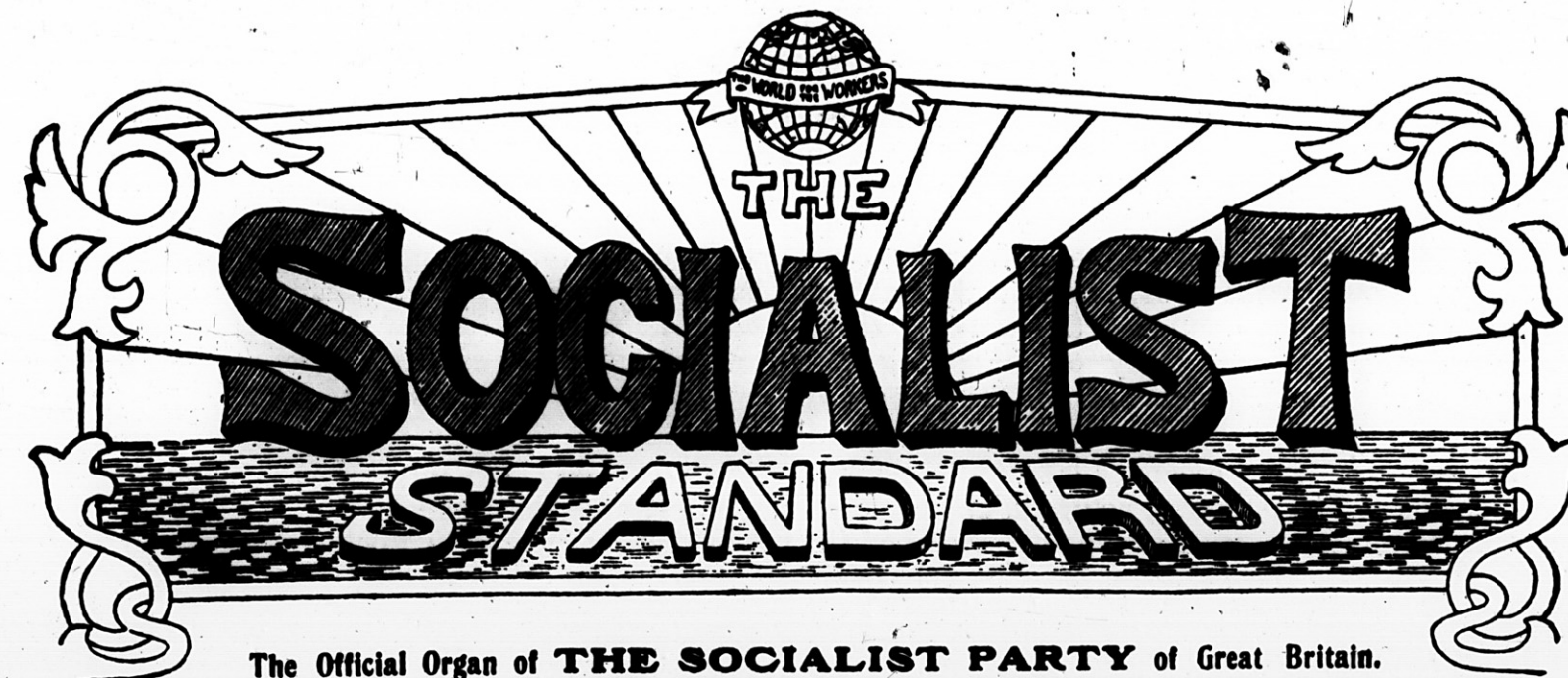
**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



THE  
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#### CONTENTS.

THE TIME FOR ACTION . . . . .	1	SOCIALIST ACTION IN PARLIAMENT . . . . .	9
THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT . . . . .	3	THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST PROHIBITION IN THE U.S.A. . . . .	10
MARX AND DICTATORSHIP . . . . .	5	NOTES BY THE WAY . . . . .	12
THE BREAKING UP OF THE I.L.P. . . . .	8	THE INTELLECTUALS AND MARX . . . . .	14

## THE TIME FOR ACTION

### A LETTER TO A YOUNG SOCIALIST.

**Y**OU say that you like our theory but you cannot understand our seeming indifference to action. You are mystified that a party with so firm a grasp of principles should appear to have no capacity—or no stomach—for applying them in the practical way that appeals to the workers. You say that we leave all the active struggle to other parties with only half our insight into the social problem. You ask, "What is the good of all the S.P.G.B.'s lucid explanations of the failure of capitalism if they do not lead somewhere? Is it not time something was done, something drastic and exciting, right in the line of march towards Socialism?" You end with a warning: "If the S.P.G.B. will not, then someone else must."

You put your question bluntly. We will give you a candid answer. But first a word about yourself. You are a newcomer to the Socialist movement and for that reason we are not surprised at your impatience. You have just had your eyes opened to the problem that confronts the workers. At first you did not know that there is a problem. Then you found the problem and were baffled by it. Now you see the solution, and on being told

that you cannot get there at once you want to know the reason why.

There is no need to stop long over a re-statement of the problem. We live in a world marvellously equipped for producing all the things the human race needs. Yet so faultily is society organised to deal with the present situation that half of the equipment is out of gear and far more than half of the population is forcibly prevented from using up the goods already produced, and from using the equipment to produce more goods. This is absurd and indefensible. Almost every interested person sees this and says that it is absurd, from the Prince of Wales and the Leaders of the Churches to the professional politicians and their millions of followers. Yet it has remained for the socialist to perceive what it is that paralyses even the well-meant plans of reformers. The means of producing and distributing wealth are the private property of individuals and are under their legal control. The rest of the population—representing more than 90 out of every 100—may not use the means of production or consume the products unless they can first obtain the permission of the minority or their paid agents. The workers may not eat the



food they grew and prepared, wear the clothes they made, dwell in the houses they built, or travel in the trains they constructed except by leave of the capitalists. Unless and until the masters say "you may now go in and work," the workers have no right to set foot in the mills, mines, and factories. While this situation continues the working class, who form the great majority of the population, may not live except by permission of the propertied minority.

The way out of the economic labyrinth is simple and obvious. The majority, acting in an organised and orderly fashion, must assume possession of the means of life in the name of society as a whole. Society must take them over from the few whose private ownership stands in the way of the general welfare. That is where we want to get. But how? And where do we begin?

There are plenty of people telling the workers what to do, but for our present purpose it is not necessary to examine what most of them say. The advice of nine out of ten of them consists of recommending actions which would leave the cause of the trouble quite untouched. So we need not bother our heads on this occasion with the schemes which only tinker with capitalism and leave the capitalists still in possession. There are, however, other advisers who profess to agree about the need for Socialism, but who advocate immediate action. They say, "Let us demonstrate about the Means Test. Let us send deputations to the Public Assistance Committees and to Ministers of the Crown. Let us hold meetings of protest outside the Japanese Embassy"—as the I.L.P. and the Communists tried to do on May Day. "Let us distribute anti-war leaflets. Let us organise to stop the transport of munitions in the event of war. Let us demand higher wages, shorter hours, holidays with pay, more unemployment benefit, lower rents, etc., etc. Let us back up all these demands with demonstrations and deputations, and with strikes, local, national and international."

The people who are the loudest with this sort of talk call it "direct action" or "mass action." And the strange thing is, that that is just what it isn't. It is not direct action. Much of it is not "action" at all in the popular sense of the word. Much of it is just talk. Much of it—strikes, for example—is inaction, the sometimes useful but very negative state of refraining from work. If we socialists were free agents, able to do what we like, we would not do any of these things. We would not waste a moment on things so hopelessly indirect and roundabout. We would—if we could—take direct action and advise the workers to do the same. Indeed, the workers would not need anybody's advice. *If it were not for a something that stands in the way* the workers could walk into the shops and warehouses where the food and clothing is and take what they want. Then they

could occupy the land, the factories and the workshops, and use them to produce more goods, no longer for the employing class but for society as a whole. That would be direct action. That is what we would advocate if it could be done. It cannot be done, so we say that it cannot be done. The so-called direct actionists and mass actionists say differently. They say that direct action is possible, but they know that it is not. That is why the one thing they never advocate is direct action, and why the things they call direct action are always anything but that. Could anything be more indirect than for workers who produced too many goods for the market and thus threw themselves out of work to go cap-in-hand to the Public Assistance Committee for permission to have a small portion of the unsaleable surplus?

The something that stands in the way of direct action is the control by the capitalist class of the machinery of government, including the police, the army, navy and air force. Because of that, the so-called actionists, just like the Socialist Party of Great Britain, must confine their activities to those things permitted by the capitalists. For practical purposes all that any of us can do is to propagate our ideas and organise to apply them eventually. The "actionists" are muddled in their ideas and are organising for a kind of action that can never succeed. Our ideas are clear and we organise for the only action which can eventually command success—action to gain control of the machinery of government and the armed forces. Socialists are at present a small minority of the working class. The majority of the workers are not yet with us. Until they are won over they will continue to vote the capitalists and their agents into control. It is the non-socialist workers who periodically at elections give the capitalists the power to say to the socialist minority: "If you take any action against our interests, and in defiance of our laws and our wishes, we will crush you."

These are the facts of the situation. You will have to give heed to them and curb your impatience, for you will ignore these facts at your peril. There are really only two courses open to you. You may learn from the experience and observation of others as we have done, or you will learn more slowly and painfully by frittering away your energy and enthusiasm on the senseless activities misnamed direct action. H

## READ...

### "WHY CAPITALISM WILL NOT COLLAPSE"

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## The Truth About the Co-operative Movement.

Baillie J. P. Dollan, writing in the *New Leader* (27th May, 1932), sympathetically reviewed the decisions of the recent Co-operative Congress, and supplied some interesting facts and figures relating to the Co-operative movement.

Co-operation has always been presented to the workers with a double appeal. The appeal to their immediate interests, in the shape of cheaper commodities, plus dividends, and the promise of Socialism as a result of every industry being brought under Co-operative control.

If all this were true, then the very moderate success of the Co-op. after a century of effort seems to prove that the workers want neither cheap commodities and dividends, nor Socialism. For what could be more alluring than the prospect held out to them? Buy in the cheapest market, keep all profits for themselves and, at the same time, pave the way to a system where they would be free from capitalist exploitation. As a slogan it is ideal, but as a working hypothesis it will not stand a moment's logical examination.

Co-operation cannot beat capitalism at its own game, and even if all the workers spent all their wages at Co-op. stores, the latter could only employ a very small proportion of them.

At present the total share capital of the retail business is £119,000,000, while the sales amount to £210,000,000. Baillie Dollan expresses the view that these figures show a serious weakness. He says that the turnover should be at least five or six times as great as the capital. He says further:—

There has thus been an increase in share and loan capital and in savings bank deposits during a period of trade depression, while sales have decreased. This is not healthy finance, because the increase in capital and the decrease in sales compels the adoption of a policy which will insure a financial return on the investment, rather than the adoption of a policy which will lead to increased sales, because of reduced prices and improved values.

Savings bank deposits, although only a small proportion of the total capital—just over £5,000,000 compared with £119,000,000—obtain their interest from the business. Both these sums are on the increase. The share capital increased by £6,500,000 and the savings increased by £114,976 during 1931. It will thus be seen that the Co-op. is already well on the usual capitalist road of over-capitalisation.

But this is not the full story of the hollowness of the Co-op. when considered as a merely capitalist business. With a membership of 6,626,492, plus family dependents, it does a retail trade of £210,000,000, an average of £10 per member per annum. It is apparent, therefore, that the majority of the members must find it cheaper to do most of their shopping elsewhere.

Apart from its propaganda, the Co-op. does an

enormous amount of advertising in the ordinary capitalist way. It issues constant appeals to trade-unionists, and it returns to members, in the shape of dividends, a small percentage on every pound spent with them. Yet up to the present their success can be summed up in the statement that they have six-and-a-half million members who spend on the average sevenpence daily with them for things they require.

This would be most regrettable if there really were any principles in co-operation essentially different from those of capitalism. But as the main ideas forming the basis of co-operation have been faithfully copied from capitalist business, their lack of success does little harm to the workers.

It is, of course, only the leaders and busybodies in the movement who seriously suggest that co-operation can expand until it displaces capitalism. The rank and file do not share such long-distance views to any extent. Moreover, the leaders in the movement have never made it clear how a business run on capitalist lines can evolve into something that is the opposite of capitalism. To be fair to Mr. Dollan, his most ambitious expectations are that co-operation ought to be able to afford an economic service in the transition period between capitalism and Socialism for the lower paid grades of the working class. He even goes so far as to say that it is unable to do this because of the dividend and interest system. In other words, because of its capitalist nature.

This dependence on the owners of capital is common to many forms of Labour activity, industrial or political. Every Labour newspaper and magazine is subject to the dictation of the shareholders who own it. The provision of capital for any form of enterprise is always conditional that control as to policy goes with it. The control may be delegated, but it is there all the same.

The workers in Co-operative stores and factories have no delusions about their employment. They are at the mercy of officials and foremen, just as other workers, and find it just as necessary to organise against reductions in wages. Their hours and wages are no better than the average for their particular calling. The fact that they are employed by the Co-op. means no more to them than if employed by a city corporation.

Co-operation bears no relation to Socialism. It no more leads to Socialism than does co-partnership or nationalisation. It may be said that the workers learn by their co-operative experiences that they cannot escape from capitalist slavery by any of these roads. But it is far easier and less painful to learn facts of this kind by knowledge and reasoning than by experience.

If we note the essential facts about any question, then weigh and compare them in the mind, we form a judgment, or reach a conclusion more or less cor-



rect according to the truth of our facts and the soundness of our reasoning.

In any case, before we can understand co-operation it is necessary to understand capitalism, of which co-operation is a part. The first essential fact about capitalism that compels our notice is the necessity imposed on every member of the working-class of finding a job. Which, translated into exact terms means, finding a purchaser for his labour-power. This obligation stands out above everything else. It is the most outstanding feature of capitalist society, dwarfing everything else into insignificance. Because it is the greatest factor in the worker's life, it is the starting point from which to reason towards a complete explanation of working class poverty.

How he gets his living is the most important fact of every man's life. That he is forced to sell his energy because a class of idlers own the means of production makes him a slave to that class. In every discussion affecting his position, this should take precedence of any mere modifications of that position.

The solution to this state of things is quite obviously the exact opposite of present arrangements. The means of production and distribution, instead of being class-owned, must be made the common property of the human race, to be used by them according to an agreed plan for the benefit of the people as a whole. It is a common complaint of labour leaders and others that the workers cannot agree on a definite policy for their own benefit. That is a stupid complaint, because no one in this country, apart from the S.P.G.B., has ever presented to the workers a policy of action based on the essential facts of their existence on which all can agree.

Every worker knows he must sell his labour-power in order to live. But few workers see in that fact, and the conditions behind it, the cause of their poverty. The constitution of society imposing that condition on them is the result of evolution, and appears to the individual as being quite "natural," as well as rigidly established. Thus even when he first glimpses the truth, the only result is a feeling of helplessness, amid the forces that surround him.

Among these forces are ignorance and confusion. Innumerable organisations and parties are continually telling the workers of reforms, policies and schemes that will bring them relief in the present or emancipate them in the distant future. Life is short, and the workers rise to the bait of "something now." Instead of critically examining all proposals, they put their faith in those who promise, only to find, when too late, that they have merely helped a few more adventurers to place or power.

The Co-operative Societies, on their propagandist side, are among these confusionists. On the economic side they are merely capitalist concerns

out for profits. As to purchasers' dividends, they are not alone in giving something back in order to retain customers. The practice of giving coupons entitling purchasers to free gifts is quite common, and the article bought, plus the free gift, is generally the equivalent in value of the price paid. The fact that co-operators spend such a small proportion of their wages in the stores proves they are not deceived on the question of value for money. To the bulk of them the Co-op. is just a convenient place to shop.

But so far as Co-op. leaders hold out hopes to the workers that their support will help towards a new order of society, or will even provide an escalator to reach it, they are practising deceit. The only way out for the workers is to organise politically for that special purpose. A special objective requires a special organisation for its achievement. Moreover, the objective must not be obscured by lesser things of little or no importance.

Dividends and profits can have no place within a socialist system of society. They belong to the present lop-sided arrangement of starving workers and over-fed idlers. Dividends and profits belong to capitalism, and the practice of co-operation helps to keep them alive in the minds of the workers, to the detriment of a true understanding of their real position.

F. F.

### Do You Like Coffee?

The following interesting sidelight on capitalism is a Reuter message from New York, published in the *Daily Telegraph* (5th July, 1932):—

More than 1,000,000,000 lbs. of coffee, worth over £10,000,000, have been destroyed in Brazil by the National Coffee Council in its efforts to stabilise the price of coffee. According to the New York Sugar and Coffee Exchange, the amount destroyed before June 18 was 7,786,000 bags of 132 lbs. each, or a total of 1,027,752,000 lbs.

The original plan of the Council contemplated a total destruction of 18,000,000 bags.

\* \* \* \*

### A New Pamphlet in Preparation.

A 48-page pamphlet is being prepared, dealing with the principles of the S.P.G.B., and will be ready shortly. At the same time the pamphlet, "Socialism," will need to be reprinted, as the old edition is almost exhausted. We have recently incurred heavy outlay on publishing "The Socialist Party of Great Britain and Questions of the Day." In order to publish the new pamphlet and republish "Socialism," a considerable sum of money will be required. We are anxious to publish many pamphlets, only lack of funds stands in the way. The donations already received have enabled us to publish two pamphlets this year, and further donations will enable us to publish another. We, therefore, invite donations to be sent to the Treasurer, 42, Gt. Dover Street, S.E.1.

## Marx and Dictatorship.

LETTER FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Under the above heading, the *Socialist Standard* for June chose to answer a perfectly fair question by twisting and misconstruing a clear statement of Engels into an anti-class struggle position by adding to it a typical S.P.G.B. "explanatory interpretation." The statement quoted ran, "Then look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat." This statement was "clarified," save the mark! You went on to show how the Paris Commune was an instance of majority democratic control with, of course, no suppression of minorities. Minorities had their newspapers and were allowed to carry on their propaganda. In point of fact, they were, according to you, generally and generously "protected" by the "good" working-class dictatorship.

Then you contrast this beautiful fancy against Russia, with its ruthless suppression of all minorities, and draw the vicious anti-working class conclusion that you are right and the Bolsheviks wrong.

You, as individuals, editors, contributors and members of the S.P.G.B., have every "right" to express opinions like the foregoing, but neither you nor anyone else has the slightest right to make, or try to make, Marx or Engels responsible for such cowardly opinions.

I am going to quote from Engels, but before doing so I want to say that the quotations which I will use need no "interpretations" from the S.P.G.B., or anybody else. They are clarity itself! Engels, writing on the Anti-authoritarianism of his day, says: "These gentlemen, have they ever seen a revolution? A revolution is the most authoritative thing possible. Revolution is an act in which part of the population forces its will on the other part by means of rifles, bayonets, cannon, i.e., by the most authoritative means. And the conquering party is inevitably forced to maintain its supremacy by means of that fear which its arms inspires in the reactionaries."

Had the Paris Commune not relied on the armed people against the bourgeoisie, would it have lasted longer than a single day?

"May we not rather censure the Commune for not having made sufficient use of its authority?"

Again Engels, in a letter to Bebel, after pointing out the absurdity of a Free People's State in a revolutionary period, says:—

"As the State is only a transitional institution which we are obliged to use in the revolutionary struggle in order to forcibly crush our opponents, it is a pure absurdity to talk of a 'Free People's State.' During the period that the proletariat still needs the State, it does not require it in the interest of 'Freedom,' but in the interest of crushing its antagonists. . . . And so any Marxist could go on quoting. But it is when you make the stupid blunder of contrasting the Russian 'departure' from 'equality' in wages and their 'resorting' to inequality that you really relinquish all right to be considered seriously as Socialists, and take your true place as 'just another one of those opposed to the growing power of the Working Class all over the world and particularly in Soviet Russia.'"

Try, if you can, to get the idea contained in the common Marxism: Equal "right" is a bourgeois "right" and will wither away as the State withers away, until real justice for Humanity shall establish itself in what would appear to-day as inequality, and we shall realise to the full that pregnant sentence—"From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

W. D., London.

### Reply.

If W.D. would use his intelligence, instead of his temper, he would try to meet arguments based on facts instead of wasting valuable space with foolish remarks.

It is a fact that Engels wrote:—

The German Philistine has lately been thrown once again into wholesome paroxysms by the expression "dictatorship of the proletariat." Well, gentle sirs,

would you like to know how this dictatorship looks? Then look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat. (*Paris Commune*, p. 20, New York Labor News Co.)

It is a fact that Marx described the Commune in the following words:—

The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. Instead of continuing to be the agent of the central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at *workman's wages*. (Page 74.)

While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority-usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society. Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business. And it is well known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business generally know how to put the right man in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly. On the other hand, nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture. (P. 76.)

Of Russia it was and is a fact that universal suffrage is superseded by hierarchic investiture.

It is a fact that Russia is one of the most bureaucracy-ridden countries in the world, and that the police and all the officials of the administration are the agents of the Central Government—the Central Committee of the Communist Party—and are not revocable at the behest of the majority of the Russian people.

It is a fact that the officials of the Russian Government do not perform their duties at workmen's wages in the sense Marx used the term.

The above are a few of the host of fundamental differences between the Paris Commune and the Russian Soviet Republic.

We will quote the evidence of Lenin. Speaking at the 4th Congress of the Communist International in 1922, and enumerating the reasons the Bolsheviks made mistakes, he said:—

A fourth reason is the nature of our State apparatus. One of our misfortunes was that we had to take over the old state apparatus. The State apparatus often works against us. It is a matter of history that in the year 1917, when we had seized power, the State apparatus practised sabotage against us. We were greatly alarmed, and said: "Please come back to us"—and they all came back. That was our misfortune. We have now an enormous mass of officials, but we still lack a sufficient quantity of trained energies to keep them under proper control.

In actual practice we often find that here at the top, where we exercise the powers of State, the apparatus works all right, whereas lower down the officials do as they please, and what they please to do is to work against our measures.

At the top we have a few—I do not know the exact



number—I am sure it is only a few thousand, or at a maximum, a few ten thousands—of our people; in the lower grades we have hundreds of thousands of officials bequeathed to us from Czarist days or taken over by us from capitalist society. To some extent deliberately and to some extent unconsciously, they work against us. (*The Communist*, 16th December, 1922.)

From the above it will be seen that the Bolsheviks took over the old state apparatus, whereas the Commune did not. Since Lenin's speech, Stalin and company have developed this state apparatus into a huge overshadowing power that crushes out all who disagree on particular points of policy with the small clique at the top. Heresy hunts and the activities of the secret police remind one of the extent the ideas of the Middle Ages affect Bolshevik activity. Trotsky and others have already found this out to their cost.

In further illustration of the undemocratic nature of the Russian Dictatorship as compared with the Paris Commune, let us quote once again the statement of Zinovieff at the 1st Congress of the 3rd International in March, 1919:—

Our Central Committee has decided to deprive certain categories of party members the right to vote at the Congress of the Party. Certainly it is unheard of to limit the right of voting within the party, but the entire party has approved this measure, which is to insure the homogeneous unity of the Communists.

So that, in fact, we have 500,000 members who manage the entire State machine from top to bottom. (*The Socialist*, 29th April, 1920.)

Now, W.D., would you mind informing us what kind of a "working class dictatorship" this is from which not only the working class but even members of the ruling party are excluded? Is this the form under which "real justice for humanity" (whatever this empty bourgeois phrase means!) will "establish itself"?

Let us now take the two extracts from pages 64 and 67 of Lenin's "State and Revolution," that have been quoted by our opponent. W.D. says they need no "interpretation" from us or anybody else. Having doctored the quotations by tearing them from their context, he naturally objects to analysis.

The first is a quotation from an article written in 1873, by Engels, in an Italian paper against the Anarchists who "denied every form of authority, of subordination, of power." The whole of the quotation given by Lenin on page 64 is as follows:—

If the Autonomists merely meant to say that the social organisation of the future would admit authority only within those limits which the conditions of industry inevitably dictate, then it would be possible to come to an understanding with them. But they are blind in respect of all the facts which make authority necessary, and they fight passionately against a mere word.

Why do not the Anti-Authoritarians limit themselves to shouting against the political authority, against the State? All Socialists agree that the State, and together with it, also political authority, will vanish as the result of the future Socialist Revolution, i.e., that public functions will lose their political character and will be transformed into simple administrative functions, concerned with social interests. But the Anti-Authoritarians demand that the political State should be abolished at one

blow, even before those social relations which gave birth to the State are themselves abolished. They demand that the first act of the Social Revolution shall be the abolition of all authority.

These gentlemen, have they ever seen a Revolution? Revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritative thing possible. Revolution is an act in which part of the population forces its will on the other part by means of rifles, bayonets, cannons, i.e., by the most authoritative means. And the conquering party is inevitably forced to maintain its supremacy by means of that fear which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Had the Paris Commune not relied on the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie, would it have lasted longer than a single day? May we not rather censure the Commune for not having made sufficient use of this authority? And so, either the Anti-Authoritarians themselves do not know what they are talking about, in which case they merely sow confusion, or they do know what they are talking about, in which case they are betraying the proletariat. In either case they serve only the interests of reaction.

If Engels' statement is analysed, and not blindly bolted, it is obvious that he was arguing against those who were opposed to the capture and use of political power. Engels and the S.P.G.B. maintain that political power must be captured by the workers and used as an agent of emancipation. Engels also means that it shall be the work of the majority, hence his reference to the Paris Commune. Engels nowhere says that a minority of the population shall force its will on the majority, nor does he say that the minority shall not be allowed to express their views. He is not dealing with that point. He is only concerned that the will of the conquering party shall prevail, that it shall remain supreme. In other words, that when the majority are in favour of Socialism, and obtain control of political power, they will not allow the minority to prevent them from setting about the establishment of Socialism. He suggests that the Commune might be censured for not having made sufficient use of their authority, and we have also put forward the same view in different articles on the Commune. But this has nothing to do with the question of democracy.

The second quotation from page 66 of Lenin's book is taken from a private letter to Bebel by Engels, criticising the "Gotha programme" of 1875. Again Engels was concerned with the Anarchist's criticism of the State, and he objected to the use of the term "Free State" in the programme.

The Free People's State has been transformed into a Free State. According to the grammatical meaning of the words, the Free State is one in which the State is free in relation to its citizens, that is, a State with a despotic government. It would be well to throw overboard all this nonsense about the State, especially after the Commune, which was already no longer a State in the proper sense of the word.

The Anarchists have too long been able to throw in our teeth this "People's State," although already, in Marx's works against Proudhon, and then in the "Communist Manifesto," it was stated quite plainly that with the introduction of the Socialist order of society, the State will dissolve of itself, and will disappear, as the State is only a transitional institution which we are obliged to use in the revolutionary struggle in order forcibly to crush our opponents, it is a pure absurdity to speak of a Free People's State. During the period

when the proletariat needs the State, it does not require it in the interests of freedom, but in the interests of crushing its antagonists; and when it becomes possible really to speak of freedom, then the State, as such, ceases to exist. We should, therefore, suggest that everywhere the word State be replaced by Gemeinwesen (Commonwealth), a fine old German word, which corresponds to the French word "Commune."

Take the expression, "crushing its antagonists" in the above, and, putting it along with all Engels' other writings on the subject, what meaning can be taken from it except the crushing of those who try to frustrate the carrying out of the will of the majority? Engels certainly did not mean that one portion of the working class party should use state power to prevent another part from having a voice in policy.

In Engels' criticism of the German Social Democratic draft programme of 1891, he said:—

If anything is certain, it is this, that our party and the working class can only achieve power under the form of the democratic Republic. This is even the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat. (*The Labour Revolution*, Kautsky, p. 67.)

Finally, let us hear the voice of one who should know something of Russia:—

We know from older books that workers' bureaucracy and workers' aristocracy is the social foundation for opportunism. In Russia this phenomenon has taken on new forms. On the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat—in a backward country—surrounded by capitalism—for the first time a powerful bureaucratic apparatus has been created from among the upper layers of the workers, that is, raised above the masses, that lays down the law to them, that has at its disposal colossal resources, that is bound together by an inner mutual responsibility and that intrudes into the policies of a workers' government in its own interests, methods and regulations.

The entire leading stratum of the party that was at the helm during the revolution and the civil war has been replaced, removed and crushed. Their place has been taken by an anonymous functionary. At the same time the struggle against bureaucracy which was so acute in character during Lenin's lifetime, when the bureaucracy was not yet out of its diapers, has ceased entirely now when the apparatus has grown sky high.

And, indeed, who is there capable of carrying on this struggle? The party, as a self-controlling vanguard of the proletariat, no longer exists now. The party apparatus has been fused with the administrative. The most important instrument of the general line within the party is the G.P.U. The bureaucracy not only prohibits the criticism of the top from below but it prohibits its theoreticians from even talking about it and from noticing it. (Trotzky, quoted from the *Militant* by the *One Big Union Bulletin*, 16/6/1932.)

Perhaps the above is an illustration of the "growing power of the workers"!

Finally, W.D., if you would analyse what you write, you might think more clearly. For instance, when you say "contrasting the Russian 'departure' from 'equality' in wages and their 'resorting' to 'inequality,'" what do you mean? What is contrasted? Again, how does "Equal 'Right'" "wither away"? Again, when we quote Marx's statements as to the nature of the Commune, how are we contrasting "this beautiful fancy against Russia"? If, as it appears, you are in favour of the "ruthless suppression of all minorities," why do you say: "You, as indi-

viduals, editors, contributors, and members of the S.P.G.B., have every 'right' to express opinions like the foregoing"? At least be logical!

GILMAC.

#### Forming a Branch at Brixton.

Will readers and sympathisers in this neighbourhood who are willing to help in forming a branch please communicate with the General Secretary, at 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

\* \* \* \*

#### A Literary Man on Labour Leaders.

Mr. Sisley Huddleston, in his "Europe in Zig-zags," has something to say about the changed outlook of those whom he once regarded as Socialists. It is, of course, the social reformers he has in mind.

When I was a boy already interested in social questions, it was taken for granted that Socialism was revolutionary. This did not mean that Socialists would necessarily provoke a Revolution, but certainly that they would not neglect the opportunity which might be offered by social upheavals. But when I became a man I found that all the Socialists whom I knew set themselves up as the guardians of the existing society. Since the war there are no anti-Communists, no anti-Revolutionaries so fierce as the Socialists. They have become respectable and respected. They make the world safe for capitalism. (p. 242.)

\* \* \* \*

#### A Fabian on Marx.

A well-known Fabian, who died recently, has been the means of press reviewers having a tilt at Marx. Professor Philip H. Wicksteed's life, written by Prof. Herford, refers to Bernard Shaw's debate with Wicksteed in the 'eighties.

Wicksteed is little read here, but in American colleges the students are referred to his writings on Economics for guidance. This professor imbibed ideas from Jevons and "popularised" the utility theory of value. In 1884 he set out to show that Marx was wrong; labour was not the measure of value, and Marx had admitted this by including usefulness as a necessary condition of an article having value. Wicksteed's ideas, like Jevon's, were a revival of theories of supply and demand, which Marx had already exploded. Bernard Shaw squashed Wicksteed by using Marx's economic writings. Shaw, however, found that Marx's ideas were not suitable for intellectuals, and so he joined Wicksteed in worshipping at the shrine of Jevons.

The practice of modern capitalism in concentrating upon reducing the time spent in producing articles in order to sell cheaper, is a tribute to the truth of the labour theory of value. Nowadays, Bernard Shaw says Karl Marx "made a man of me," which is a nasty blow to the *Star* reviewer, who says Shaw knew that he was beaten by Wicksteed.

K.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard

SEPTEMBER



1932

## The Breaking Up of the I.L.P.

At its special Conference at Bradford on July 30th, the I.L.P. decided by 241 votes to 142 to leave the Labour Party. It was also decided to run I.L.P. candidates for election to Parliament and local councils, to expel members or branches which remain affiliated with the Labour Party, and to instruct members of trade unions not to pay political levy to the Labour Party. The affiliationist group, which claims to have the bulk of the Scottish membership behind it, is busy organising an affiliationist party. So we now have the exhilarating spectacle of two I.L.P.'s instead of one.

Mr. Dollan, who is leading the affiliationists, states that the total membership of the party before the split was down to 16,000, their funds were depleted and they were in debt. Mr. Brockway claims for the disaffiliationists that new members are being enrolled by the hundred, but they have failed to hold more than a very small minority of the I.L.P. candidates on local councils in Glasgow, Bradford, Manchester and elsewhere.

Mr. Brailsford, and the other three men who drafted the programme of the I.L.P. known as the Living Income Policy, have all joined the affiliationists. Mr. Brailsford, in a disrespectful letter, describes his ex-comrades as behaving with "conspicuous silliness."

Already, at the Bradford Conference, the disaffiliationists had developed a left wing—the Revolutionary Policy Group—inside which, according to John Paton, there were already dif-

ferences of opinion, foreshadowing a left-left-wing. (*New Leader*, 5th August.)

It is easy to see that the new I.L.P. consists of the same confusion-mongers as the old. While some of its leaders claim that the new policy is essentially the same as the old policy, others say that it is fundamentally different. While Mr. Campbell Stephen, at the I.L.P. Summer School on August 8th, was promising that "the present economic crisis was going to put them in the trenches in the revolutionary war" (*Manchester Guardian*, 9th August), Mr. Fenner Brockway told *Reynolds's Illustrated News* (the Co-operative Sunday paper) that the most revolutionary work of all is that of the co-operatives! (*Reynolds's*, 31st July.)

Mr. Campbell Stephen foreshadows the possibility of the I.L.P. coming out of the Unions, as it has come out of the Labour Party. Mr. R. C. Wallhead, M.P., on the other hand, while supporting disaffiliation, warned the Conference delegates not to widen the breach too much because "after doing their utmost to mould the workers' minds, they would have to come to some form of unity." (*New Leader*, 5th August.)

## The I.L.P. Still Accepts the Labour Party Programme.

And, after all this, what is the new I.L.P.'s programme but a rehash of the old, and as E. F. Wise said, just like the Labour Party's programme, except that it is "full of revolutionary phrases."

Among the "immediate demands" in the new I.L.P. programme are the following (*New Leader*, 22nd July, 1932):—

"Immediate and progressive expansion of working class purchasing power" (this is the Living Wage policy over again); "holidays with pay"; "adequate housing and reduced rents"; "unemployed maintenance to be a national charge"; "a 'full life' for the unemployed"; "individual and collective resistance to all war preparations and tendencies"; and "disarmament by example." These are a selection from the new reformist programme adopted at the Bradford Conference.

Mr. Fenner Brockway, the Chairman of the I.L.P., clinches the matter in his reiterated assertion that the I.L.P., while differing from the Labour Party as to "method" and "policy," accepts the Labour Party's objective and programme. He writes (*New Leader*, 5th August):—

I think it may be useful to say that the I.L.P. accepts the objective of the Labour Party—Socialism—and, in general, its programme. There are isolated issues upon which we differ in that programme. But on the major issues we accept it.

As Maxton has repeatedly admitted, the Labour Party's programme and object is nothing but State capitalism and State controlled capitalism. The Party which can accept that objective has not begun to understand and accept the socialist case.

## Socialist Action in Parliament, Etc.

In the July issue of the *Socialist Standard* we explained why a Socialist Party must be based on, and must fight elections on, the simple demand for Socialism and not on a programme of reforms or even on the demand for Socialism linked up with a programme of reforms. Several correspondents have now asked what should be the attitude of a minority of socialists in Parliament or a majority or minority on a local council towards measures introduced by capitalist parties. We print below one of these letters:—

Bentley,  
Doncaster

To the Editorial Committee.

For the benefit of a few readers of the "S.S." could you give the Party's position upon a few points that arise from the 6th Clause of the Declaration of Principles.

Seeing that Socialism is the object of the Party, and that the 6th Clause is the method advocated to get power to establish it, what would be the attitude or position of a single candidate or a few S.P.G.B. candidates who were elected by class conscious electors to the House of Commons, towards the problems discussed by capitalist politicians?

What would be the Socialist attitude towards the following measures that were being put on the Statute Book by, say, a Labour Government?—  
An Improved Minimum Wage Bill for all workers,  
An Improved Compensation Act,  
A Shorter Working Day for a section or for all workers,  
Abolition of the Means Test.

What would be the attitude of the single socialist or a minority of socialists on the Local Councils towards the problems discussed in Council?

Finally, in the event of a few Constituencies voting a majority of Class Conscious Socialists into power in the local councils, what would be their attitude from the point of view of administration of Council work?

Hoping a reply to the same will fulfil a useful purpose,

Yours,  
EDWARD LITTLER.

## Reply.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain has as its object the establishment of Socialism. It is a revolutionary party based on the class struggle, and not a reform party. Holding that no amelioration of the workers' condition can be obtained under capitalism that would be worth the amount of time and energy spent in working and organising to obtain it, the Socialist Party is opposed to the waste of such time and energy, and to the confusion involved in attempting to improve capitalism by means of reforms, thus obscuring the class struggle. A party claiming to be socialist, but with a list of reforms or "immediate demands," attracts reformers who are not socialists, and has a reformist and not a socialist electorate behind it. Even if such a party obtains political control it is useless for the purpose of furthering Socialism.

While the S.P.G.B. is opposed to a reformist policy the socialist delegate in Parliament or on a local council is not, therefore, bound to vote against every particular measure. The Socialist Party of Great Britain does not hold that the measures already taken or to be taken by the capitalists are

all of them bound to be useless or harmful to the workers, or bound to impede progress towards Socialism. Some of the suffrage, factory and trade union legislation in the past, while assisting capitalists immediately or in the long run, has not been correspondingly harmful to the workers. The Socialist Party holds that some of the measures brought forward by the capitalists owing to economic developments or owing to conflicts of interest between sections of the capitalists themselves can be used as weapons in the class struggle by the workers and by the socialist movement. That being the case, a socialist minority in Parliament or on a local council would be required by the socialists who sent them there to criticise from the socialist standpoint all measures brought before them (pointing out their futility in comparison with Socialism and so forth), and to refrain from supporting, bargaining or allying themselves with any party for temporary ends, but at the same time would be required to vote for particular measures where there is a clear gain to the workers and the socialist movement in so doing. (The decision would, of course, be in the hands of the Party, and not in the hands of the individual.) It may be added that such measures are more likely to be put forward when Socialism is imminent, and a frightened ruling class is striving to keep back the flood by making concessions.

The position which the S.P.G.B. has always taken up, and which is outlined above, differs fundamentally from the position of candidates elected on reform programmes by reformist voters. In the case of socialists elected on a socialist programme, the decision lies with socialists, well able to judge the merits from a socialist standpoint. In the case of reformists (the I.L.P., for example) the decision rests with a party and an electorate which do not know and accept the socialist case, and are incapable of judging from the socialist standpoint.

With regard to the issues raised by our correspondent, it is of little use to give a yes or no answer, because the effect of particular measures depends on the time and circumstances and the actual clauses of the measures in question. It is not sufficient merely to be told that a bill is described by its supporters as a bill for a minimum wage, or for an improved compensation law, etc. Advocates of a minimum wage have often associated it with the prohibition of strikes, and a Minimum Wage Bill might have tacked on to it a clause penalising strikers. The abolition of the Means Test may look like a clear issue on which a socialist minority would be instructed to vote for abolition, but it must be borne in mind that a proposal for its nominal abolition would probably be linked up with the imposition of some other objectionable procedure.

What is stated above in connection with a minority in Parliament explains also the attitude of



a minority on a local council. A socialist minority on the London County Council, for instance, would vote for a proposal to restore the right of selling literature and taking up collections in London parks since the S.P.G.B. are the chief sufferers from the prohibition introduced a few years ago.

Our correspondent's last question refers to a majority on a local council.

By the time a few constituencies had voted a majority of class conscious socialists into control of the local councils the rest of the country would be on the verge of doing the same thing, and on the verge of sending a majority of socialist delegates to Parliament also. If such a hypothetical situation arose the socialist majority would use the limited power, funds and organisation of the municipalities to help with the task of capturing the central seat of power, in every way available.

In conclusion, we must emphasise that the object of the Socialist Party of Great Britain is the establishment of Socialism. This purpose, in an organisation based solely upon the demand for Socialism, and putting forward candidates on that and nothing else, cannot be forgotten or submerged. Our policy, our organisation, and all our activities are governed by that objective. The question of voting for or against, or ignoring measures introduced by non-socialist parties, does not and cannot influence our policy towards the objective.

ED. COMM.

#### TO OUR READERS. PLEASE NOTE

The "Socialist Standard" can be obtained from the following Newsagents:—

LONDON.  
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## The Campaign Against Prohibition in the U.S.A.

At the time of writing arrangements are being made to hold a big parade, and it is claimed that many trade unions and working men have applied for permission to march in it.

The parade is to protest against the Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition), and to demand the legalising of beer. The workers are led to believe that if beer is legalised a lot of jobs will be brought back and this will cause a demand for commodities which will put the workers on the road to more prosperous times.

It is interesting to consider why the Eighteenth Amendment was made the law of the land. We will quote Fort, a member of the House of Representatives, in a speech made before the House concerning the economic causes of Prohibition:—

With high-speed machinery and increased specialisation in its use, alertness of body and mind became essential for both the safety of the worker and the efficiency of his work.

With factories organised so that processes were continuous, and a break at any point in the handling chain slowed all the wheels and hampered all the work, each workman's presence and correct performance must be assured. Midday drinking by one man might cause someone to slip and injure either his fellow workman or the whole system. So, too, the plant must be fully managed every day, each specialised workman at his appointed task. No longer could our industries proceed with a 50 per cent. attendance Monday, 80 per cent. on Tuesday, and 100 per cent., perhaps, by Wednesday noon. In the old days of one or two men it had not been so serious. If necessary the delinquent could work later when sober and make up for lost time. But the eight-hour day and dependence of one man's work upon the other made that impossible.

Then, too, machines were fast replacing horses. Now a horse would get home with a drunken driver, but a railroad train, trolley car, or an automobile might not. The swelling power of our new economic era, therefore, had to match swords against the saloon.—(*Times*, New York, February 2nd, 1930.)

Charles and Mary Beard support this view. They say: "... employers of labour, in their quest for efficiency, gave money and support to the new crusade, for drunken workers were a danger as well as an economic loss to machine industry." ("The Rise of American Civilisation," Vol. II., page 733.)

As long as it remained a "moral" issue, Prohibition did not make much headway; but when it was found that drink interfered with the profits of manufacturers, it had to go. The distillery and brewery owners had to be sacrificed for the good of other manufacturers, and their workers lost their jobs. The workers have very short memories, for it is not so long ago that they believed that their poverty was due to drinking, and that if Prohibition were passed they would be better off. But we now find the position of the worker to be the same as it was before. Prohibition or wet, there is no difference. In relation to the capitalist, the worker is still a wage slave and poverty stricken. Now he believes that Prohibition is the cause of his

poverty, but if he would think just a bit and look across the herring pond he would discover many countries in Europe that do not have Prohibition, yet their wage-slaves are in the same condition as in U.S.A., where we do have it.

Thus it can be clearly seen that neither Prohibition nor Repeal is the solution to the wage-workers' problems. While Repeal might make prosperity for some distillers and brewery owners, the workers will gain nothing.

The contention that the legalising of beer will make more employment cannot be accepted. Although the figures given are not capable of proof there is little doubt that there are more persons engaged in the liquor industry now than before Prohibition. In New York City alone there are more than thirty thousand speakeasies; it is doubtful if ever there were as many saloons as this. Also, owing to the less efficient methods that have to be used now than when it was legal, room is made in this trade for extra thousands.

And as for workers not being able to get a drink, this is not due to any lack of beer supply, but that they simply cannot afford to buy it. If you have the price you can get all you want. This state of affairs will continue, whether legally or not. There is not a bit of doubt but that when beer is legalised, Prohibition, or something near it, will still be the lot of many wage-workers. They will be unable to buy much beer owing to lack of money.

Since the introduction of Prohibition, considerable changes have taken place. The capitalist is no longer worried about having to make his workers sober by law. Owing to the unemployment situation, police are now required to control the large numbers of applicants for jobs. The wage-slaves stay sober because they know they can be so easily replaced, and that if they get into the ranks of the unemployed they will have to stay sober, anyway. So the manufacturing capitalist is not worried on this score any longer, and for this and other reasons has changed his outlook. Behind the demand for the legalising of beer is the problem of taxation. This is behind much of the propaganda now being let loose upon the working class.

Making beer legal appears to be in the interest of sections of the capitalist class, who want to shed some of the increasing burden of taxes. They cast about to discover how to shift some of this burden of taxes on to other sections of their class. They see that the brewery owners pay no taxes on beer at present; they know it is being made, so why not make it legal and tax it, thus making the brewery section of the capitalist class pay a share of taxes? They would have less to pay themselves, so they are willing to bring back beer, which, like the poor, is always with us, wet or dry.

The worker, generally, thinks that he, also, suffers from the burden of taxes. So he is easily led to believe that his interests are involved when

the question of taxation comes up. If he would examine this point a little more closely, he would find that taxes are a levy on property, and that wage-slaves are, in the main, propertyless. To the workers, as a class, it does not matter a tinker's damn if the taxes are high or low: all the worker gets when he works is, roughly, a wage sufficient to keep him in a state where he can continue to produce efficiently and bring up a family, and no more; just enough to repeat the process of bringing new values into existence, new wealth that did not exist before he applied his labour power. If prices fall owing to lowered taxation, or any other reason, wages tend to follow. The employers, not the workers, gain thereby.

Yet we see that reformer after reformer brings out this question of taxes, which, economically, has nothing to do with the workers. This is done to hoodwink the workers into giving support to this or that section of the capitalist class. That section whose representatives succeed in enticing the workers' support secures political control of the State. In this position they have the power to shift the tax burden to the shoulders of other sections, thus relieving themselves in proportion.

It is not due to beer, or lack of it; nor is it due to high or low taxes, that conditions are as we find them. It is due to the system of society that divides mankind into classes, those who own the means of wealth production and distribution, and those who own nothing but their labour-power.

TAFFY BROWN,

Workers' Socialist Party of U.S.A.

#### NEW PAMPHLET

### The Socialist Party of Great Britain AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

Deals with the founding of the Socialist Party, the Liberal, Tory, Labour and Communist parties and the I.L.P., the Russian Dictatorship, War, Trade Unions, Social Reforms, etc.

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#### SUNDAY EVENING MEETINGS

Regular Sunday Evening Meetings will be resumed at Head Office the first Sunday in October. Admission free. Questions and Discussion. All invited. Commence, 8.0 p.m.



## Notes by the Way.

### Circumstances Alter Cases. A Communist Slogan for England Only.

One of the useless reforms urged by the communists in Great Britain is the abolition of inheritance and the confiscation of all fortunes over £1,000. (See *Class Against Class*, published 1929, by C.P.G.B., p. 30.)

What gives special interest to this demand is that it is something the communists in Russia make no pretence of carrying out. Russian law "recognises the right of inheritance irrespective of the amount involved." (*Soviet Union Year Book*, 1930, p. 498.) Inheritance tax is paid, but the law specifies maximum rates of tax, which may not be exceeded by the separate republics which make up the Soviet Union. The maximum scale of tax is graduated from £2 on £200, up to £28,854 on £50,000. (See *Year Book*, p. 405.)

We wonder what sort of reception a simple-minded English communist would have who tried to enforce the abolition of inheritance and confiscation of all fortunes above £1,000, among the highly paid technicians and administrative officials in Russia.

### Ethel Mannin's Blunder.

A recent recruit to the I.L.P. is the novelist, Miss Ethel Mannin. In February she was reminded by a correspondent that her claim to be a socialist does not square with the reformist programme of her party. In reply she wrote:—

I agree entirely that the I.L.P. is a reformist party—which is a reason why I shall probably not remain with them. Actually I have no faith in *any* party. (Italics hers.)

When the split came, Miss Mannin followed the disaffiliationists. She gives her reasons in the *New Leader* (12th August). One is that she believes in moving "to the left—always to the left." Another she explains as follows:—

We of the Left Wing have our dream, the tremendous dream of Socialism in Our Time, and it is up to us to be proud of it instead of being apologetic about it. Thank God we have this dream, for no one else seems to have it—certainly not the official Labour Party! And without this dream what is left to us?

This is where Miss Mannin makes her mistake. The I.L.P. have not got this programme now. Brailsford and three other I.L.P. leaders wrote it for them (the "Living Income Programme"). But already by 1928, according to the Report to the I.L.P.'s Annual Conference, presented by the Administrative Council, "its main proposals are being gradually incorporated in the thought and propaganda of the Labour Movement, and are

exerting a continuous influence on the policies of its leadership." (Report, 1928, p. 3.)

It was, therefore, quite logical for the four men who wrote it to leave the disaffiliationists and join the official group, and quite logical for them to claim that their reformist policy, known as "Socialism in Our Time," is now the inspiration of the Labour Party. The leading disaffiliationists, who assert that they have made a clean break with the I.L.P.'s past, confirm this claim.

So that Miss Mannin is in the uncomfortable position of having her body in the I.L.P.—and moving "to the left—always to the left"—while the Ark of the Covenant containing the essence of her proud dream is being borne off to the right by the four men who fashioned it. And in the meantime Maxton and others have drawn up a new list of reforms for their reformist party.

Miss Mannin should be told about this.

\* \* \*

### Muddled Middleton Murry.

After achieving distinction in literature, Mr. John Middleton Murry blew in on the world of working class politics by announcing himself a Marxist and communist. It was at once evident that Mr. Murry has much to learn and many old habits of thought and expression to unlearn before he will appreciate what the socialist case is and be able to enlighten others. His attempts to explain Marx befog rather than clear the air, and nobody would be more startled than Marx if he could know what he is supposed by Mr. Murry to have meant by some of his writings. To say this is not to throw doubt on Mr. Murry's well-meaningness, but it appears to be very difficult for the typical academic or literary man to believe that Marx could have meant just what he said.

How muddled Murry is can be seen from his constant shifting of position and his enthusiasm for contradictory policies. He appears at first to have had leanings towards the Communist Party, and is still a worshipper of Russia, being under the impression that Socialism is being built up in that country. However, he quarrelled with the communists and turned up in the I.L.P. While still there he read one of our pamphlets in March this year, and promptly wrote to us: "It seems to me I ought to join." He did not proceed with the matter, and by August he had discovered a new hope. Writing in *The Adelphi* (August, p. 764), he said: "There is a good hope that gradually the I.L.P. will become a genuinely socialist organisation—the only one in this country."

It would be interesting to know in what way the S.P.G.B., which apparently was a socialist body in Mr. Murry's eyes in March, had ceased to be socialist by August.

In the same issue of *The Adelphi*, Mr. Murry shows how little he understands of Socialism by defining it as "economic equality"—an inadequate phrase completely missing the essence of the matter, which is that its basis will be the common ownership of the means of production and distribution. He also describes Mr. R. H. Tawney as chief of the "small number of genuine socialists" in the Labour Party. Mr. Tawney has never committed himself to common ownership. In his *Acquisitive Society* (p. 67) he expressly declares his belief in the necessity of continuing property incomes in the form of interest on investments.

Unless Mr. Murry will make an effort to understand the elementary principles of Socialism he will no doubt suffer the fate of many others who have skimmed over the working class movement. He will drift off, disgusted with the slow progress of socialist organisation, but no wiser than when he came in as to why it makes slow progress and why his well-meant efforts do not help.

\* \* \*

### Lo, the Poor Indian!

Those who profess to believe that the poverty of the Indian workers and peasants is due only to the British exploiters would do well to ponder over a statement which appeared in the *Daily Herald* (26th July), that there are twenty Indian millionaires living in Bombay whose fortunes are estimated to total £70 millions. The capitalist amasses his wealth by exploitation, and whether he is Indian or British, he does not allow race, religion or sentiment to come between himself and his riches and power.

\* \* \*

### The Power of the State.

We have heard much from communists and syndicalists—particularly in South Wales—about the all-conquering power of organisation on the economic field. How limited the unions are and how helpless against those who control the machinery of Government was well illustrated in a recent case. On April 1st, 1932, Mr. Justice Bennett granted an injunction restraining miners at the Bedwas Navigation Colliery from "the watching and besetting of the colliery," as being in violation of the law. Members of the Miners' Federation ignored the injunction and held a show of cards at the mine. On June 29th the Judge required the defendants to appear for Contempt of Court. Accordingly they were compelled to travel to London at their own expense and appear in person to make individual and abject apology. They all of them pleaded that they would not have held the show of cards if they thought it was in violation of the injunction, and they solemnly promised not to do it again. (See *Times*, 30th June and 8th July.) Some of them are said to be communists and active advocates of so-called direct action.

### Curious Communist Electioneering.

Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold, until just recently a supporter of the National Government, writing in the *O.B.U. Bulletin* (Winnipeg, 28th July), tells how he and Saklatvala, who were candidates of the Labour Party, and later became communists, angled for the non-socialist votes of Irish nationalists and Catholics. He says that he, at Motherwell, and Saklatvala, at Battersea, had deliberately picked seats with a large Irish vote and set out to capture it by appealing to nationalist sentiment. Newbold claims that fully half of the votes he received in 1918 were Irish votes. In the 1922 election, after Newbold had joined the communists, 5,000 out of his 8,000 voters were Catholic Irishmen. This is what the communists called winning elections for Communism and Internationalism.

Newbold has had cause to welcome the split in the I.L.P. Having been a Fabian, then in turn a member of the Labour Party and I.L.P., the Communist Party, the I.L.P. again, then the Social Democratic Federation, then the MacDonald National Labour Group, he was for the moment stumped to find a new party to join. The split in the I.L.P., by increasing the number of parties, has given him another chance, and he is now supporting the Maxtonites.

\* \* \*

### An Angry Right Honourable.

The Right Honourable Thomas Kennedy, P.C., is editor of the *Social Democrat* and is very angry because Viscount Snowden, speaking in the House of Lords on June 29th, commented on the late H. M. Hyndman's belief that capitalism would collapse as each new industrial crisis came round. Kennedy says that it is a lie, angrily denounces Snowden and the I.L.P., and demands evidence for the statement. Snowden had been supplied (free of charge) with a copy of our pamphlet, "Why Capitalism will not Collapse," and doubtless was indebted to it for the information about Hyndman. This recalls a curious action on the part of the *Social Democrat*. When we published the pamphlet (which contains evidence for the statement about Hyndman) we sent copies to the *Social Democrat* (of which Kennedy was not then editor) and *Forward*, the I.L.P. journal. *Forward* reviewed it and acknowledged that it is published by the S.P.G.B. The *Social Democrat* did not review it directly, but published an editorial fiercely attacking it on the basis of *Forward's* review, and implying, without saying so directly, that it is published by the I.L.P.

The *Social Democrat's* editorial (April, 1932) actually pretended that the pamphlet is an attack on doctrinaire economic theory and a defence of the "broad, open-minded, benevolent, pleasant-Sunday-afternoon methods of the I.L.P." in the days when it was led by Ramsay MacDonald.



There is nothing whatever either in the pamphlet or in the review by *Forward* which supports the extraordinary line taken by the *Social Democrat*.

### A View on Russia.

In *The Times* (5th and 6th August) an Italian journalist, Carlo Scarfoglio, writing after a tour of Russia, gives an interesting account of the rapid emergence of the typical features of capitalism. He shows how, in spite of the claims and intentions of communists, industrial development is giving rise to the ordinary class differentiations of capitalism, from the collective farm labourers earning about £100 a year up to the foreign specialists with £2,400 and every sort of additional privilege. Clerical and so-called intellectual workers are now being paid more than skilled craftsmen and the latter more than unskilled. He notes the appearance of privately-owned motor cars and racing boats, and the accumulation of capital in the hands of the investors in State loans, receiving up to 10 per cent. interest. The so-called State industries are tending more and more to independence, and to the position of ordinary private enterprises.

He shows the illusion behind the belief that the workers and the State are one, with common interests. The wage-earner is in precisely the same position as in any other country.

Scarfoglio thinks that the Bolsheviks may be able and will wish to continue calling Russian capitalism by the name of communism. H.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7), where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Readers in Canada are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Canada at 204, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

### The Intellectuals and Marx.

A correspondent asks why it is that accredited "intellectuals like Shaw, Wells and Laski are not Marxists."

One reason, clearly demonstrated by the writings and speeches of the gentlemen in question, is that they have never got within miles of understanding Marx. We have shown in these columns how Laski misrepresents Marx's writings (and declines to reply to criticisms). Shaw on occasion talks the most utter nonsense about Marx. A year or two ago he brazenly informed an ignorant crowd of business men connected with the building trade that Marx claimed to be able to tell from, say, a piece of pottery, what was the nature, the arts, sciences, politics, etc., of the social system under which it was produced. When Shaw was challenged to say where Marx was supposed to have made this extraordinary and absurd claim, Shaw remained silent.

Wells principal contribution to "intellectual" criticism of Marx was to inform the world that he did not like Marx's beard.

However, even if the intellectuals did understand Marx's views they would still be unlikely to avow themselves publicly as Marxists. Marx analysed the capitalist system and explained its growth and decay, and its relation to the series of social systems that have preceded it. He revealed the laws governing these historical changes and showed that the present system will pass into history as inevitably as those which preceded it, and will be followed by the only possible alternative—Socialism. All the conditions are present and ripe for the change, except one, the desire of the working class for it. The only remedy for this is knowledge, and it is this knowledge which it is the aim of the Socialist to spread. When this knowledge is spread sufficiently the end of capitalism is certain.

The position of the "intellectuals," however, even assuming they accepted Marx, would be difficult. The institutions of learning are financed and controlled by the capitalist class for the purpose of providing technical and scientific knowledge useful in industry and administration, and of teaching ideas which suit their interest. A university professor, who applied to history, economics and politics, the Marxist theories of the materialist Conception of History and the Labour Theory of Value, would learn pretty quickly that he had no control over his job and reputation.

The dramatist or novelist who used his craft to aim at the overthrow of capitalism would also learn that his popularity and success depended on something more than his genius. Many examples could be quoted of ostracism, calumny and persecution of many in the academic and literary world whose love of truth was stronger than their respect for capitalist interests. Whether the "intellectual," academic or literary, is "accredited" or "discredited" depends how far he avoids giving offence to the ruling class and to the majority of the population who so far accept the ideas and standards of the ruling class.

It is quite reasonable to suppose that, as greater numbers of workers become socialists, many of the intellectuals will be less inclined to support capitalism. Marx and Engels held this opinion. They say in the *Communist Manifesto*:—

"Finally, when the class war is about to be fought to a finish, disintegration of the ruling class and the old order of society becomes so active, so acute, that a small portion of the ruling class breaks away to make common cause with the revolutionary class, the class which holds the future in its hands. Just as in former days part of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now part of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat. Especially does this happen in the case of some of the bourgeois ideologues, who have achieved a theoretical understanding of the historical movement as a whole."

DON.

### "Darkness at Noon."

By H. Carlisle. (Jarrolds. 7s. 6d. net. 288 pages.)

The central figure in this story of mining is a miner, called "Red."

"Red" is no ordinary miner. Of great physical strength, he is much admired by his mates, chiefly because of his ability to earn double their wages; he is the champion hewer.

But "Red" is not satisfied. He hates the mines. He yearns for the "green earth above, lovely with sunshine." He longs furtively for the warm love of women but, conscious of his awkward body and simple mind, he avoids them. To escape from the mines and to satisfy the cravings of his body became the dominating purpose of his life. He conceives the idea of buying a cheap and dingy "pub" with his savings, and with it to attract a barmaid to be his wife. He succeeds. Then begins disillusion. "Red" does not leave the mines. His mercenary barmaid-wife uses her charms to prevail upon him to remain at his work until the "pub" is a success. The "pub" becomes an inn, enlarges, and engages a staff. Still "Red" remains a miner.

The threads of the story are drawn into a swift and dramatic climax. "Red," disillusioned, maddened with jealousy and doubts of his wife's fidelity, almost blinded by an eye disease contracted in the mines, murders, in the mines, a mining engineer, he suspects to be his wife's lover, strangles his wife, sets fire to the inn, and, in his mad flight

from the scene, hurls himself to destruction down a disused mining shaft which his failing eyes prevented him from seeing.

The story, which sags in parts, is graphically written and with simple literary force. "Red" is real. The sanctimonious labour leader, the trade union official, the agitator and the Ruskin man, who are impelled into the book without essential connection with the story, are all real and can be met among any section of organised workers. It has been said that this book is socialist propaganda. It is *not*. One is left with the feeling that Mr. Carlisle's talent has been wasted on a sex-baffled miner.

DON.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS.

#### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b> ...	... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 6 p.m. Clapham Common, 3.30 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Leyton, Whipps Cross Corner, 7.30 p.m.
<b>Monday</b> ...	... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b> ...	... The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E., 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E., 8 p.m. Cooks Road, Kennington Park Road (by Kennington Theatre), 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b> ...	... Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m. Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball," Cambridge Road, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b> ...	... Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b> ...	... Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.

### East London.

A MEETING WILL BE HELD AT

### POPLAR TOWN HALL

on **SUNDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, at 8 p.m.**

**Speaker:** ... **E. Wilmott.**  
**Subject:** ... **The Case for Capitalism.**

ALL INVITED. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION. ADMISSION FREE.

### A SOCIAL AND DANCE

in aid of the Publication Fund

will be held at

### THE FOOD REFORM RESTAURANT

Furnival Street, Holborn

opposite Prudential Building, near Chancery Lane Tube Station)

on **Saturday, 1st October, at 7.30 p.m.**

Members and Sympathisers cordially invited

Admission 1/6.

Tickets on sale at the door.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2, Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill. 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex-Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 390, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to W. Thompson, 34, Queen Anne Road, E.9. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room) Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 118, Howwood Street, Glasgow, S.1. Sec., A. Shaw.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A, Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Witherby Road.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Discussions after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W. 10. Sec., A. Bentley, 31, Claremont Road, W.9.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Sec., J. Rodgers, 136, Rockingham Lane.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33, Ernest Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in month at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garrat Lane, Tooting, opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., J. Keable, 60, Laitwood Road, S.W.12.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

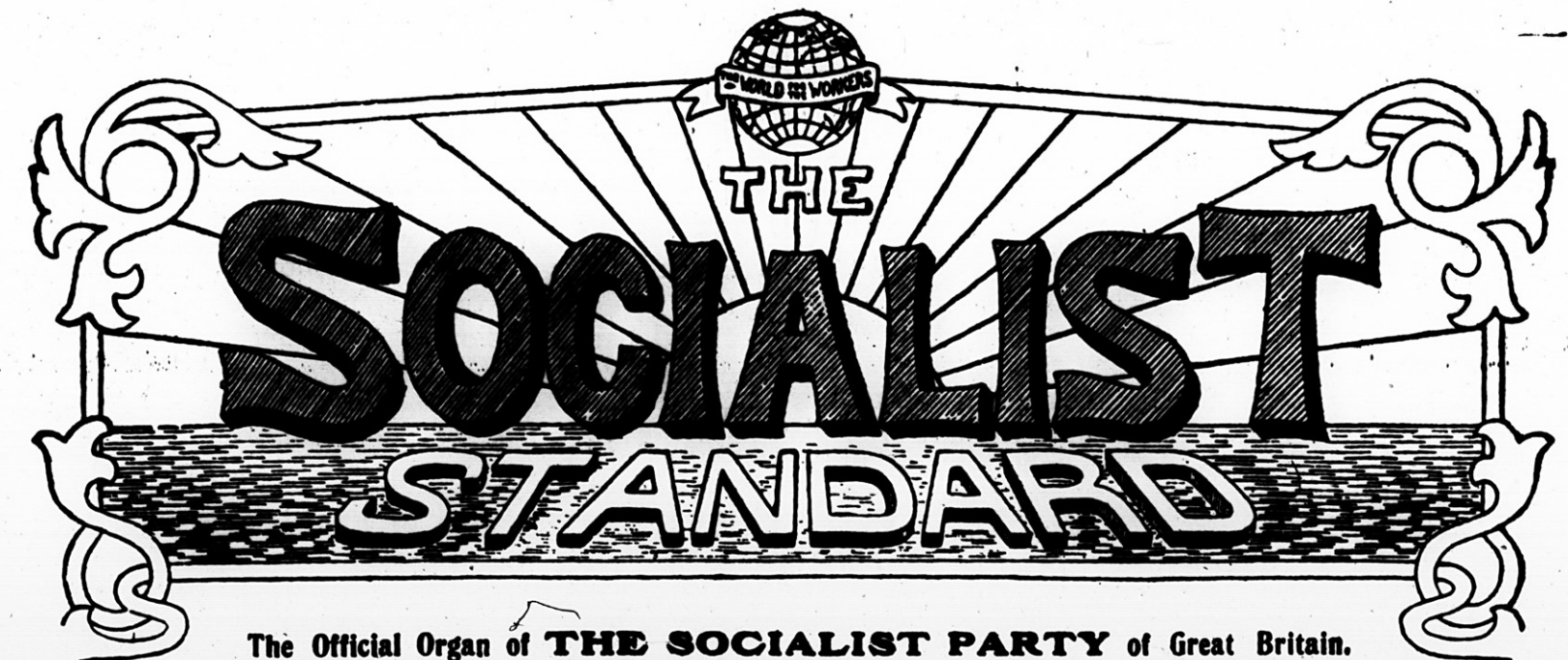
## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.





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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE

### CONTENTS.

THE FLIMSY BOND OF NATIONALISM -	17	THE BOLL WEEVIL LETS US DOWN -	24
AUSTRALIAN LABOUR LEADERS -	18	LORD WOLMER AND SOCIALISM -	24
COMING ELECTION IN THE U.S.A. -	20	MR. MIDDLETON MURRY PROTESTS -	25
A LITTLE TALK ABOUT OUR INNARDS -	22	MATTERS UNDERGROUND -	26
NOTICES OF MEETINGS AND LECTURES -	23	NOTES BY THE WAY -	28
CONFUSION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA -	23	BRANCH DIRECTORY -	32

## THE FLIMSY BOND OF NATIONALISM

Some of the supporters of the movement for Indian independence cherish the illusion that the brutal treatment meted out to them by the British authorities is peculiar to British rule over subject countries, and that such brutality will disappear when Indians govern in India. A wider knowledge would teach them that brutality marks the actions of every ruling class defending its privileges against uprisings from below.

Some of the Irish Nationalists used to talk in similar strain when the Irish movement was being suppressed by the British Government. In their minds the brutalities of the Black and Tans and other British forces were regarded as characteristics of alien rule. In due course, however, the Irish movement split into the Free State Party (the Government) and the Republicans. It was then found that the methods of the Black and Tans were fairly faithfully copied by the Irish in their treatment of each other. When an Indian ruling class gets hold of the reins of government, the Indian workers will find that there is little to choose between the brutality of Indian and English authorities.

A Nationalist publication, the *India Bulletin*, gives publicity to accounts of the harsh treatment of Indian political prisoners in Indian jails. Quite unintentionally these accounts support our argu-

ment and show what the Indian workers may expect at the hands of these wealthy Indians who finance and lead the Nationalist movement.

Like all national movements, the Indian nationalists make use of the cant that the idea of independence is one which binds all Indians in a close fraternity against the foreign tyrant. Yet one of the most persistent notes in the complaints of the political prisoners is that the wicked British authorities actually compel them to associate with their own fellow countrymen, the criminals. One lady writes as follows (*Bulletin*, June, 1932):—

The fundamental fault lies with the (jail) system, and with a Government which can fling hundreds upon hundreds of well-bred ladies into the class assigned to the lowest criminals of the land.

It is no doubt unpleasant for "well-bred ladies" to have to mix with their less fortunate Indian sisters. But there is nothing to prevent these Nationalists, with their boasted sympathy for the victims of British rule from demanding better treatment for the non-politicals as well as for themselves. But no; the letters in the *Bulletin* betray not the slightest hint of fellow feeling for the victims of the social system, many of whom have no prospect before them except the choice between harsh treatment in prison and treatment hardly less harsh outside. Gandhi and the other nationalist leaders are as vigorous as the British



ruling class in upholding private ownership of the means of life, so the political prisoners make the claim for special treatment as befits the members of a privileged class. They resent having their precious bodies brought into proximity with the victims of the social system from which their privilege is derived, and of which they are defenders.

The Indian workers will discover this when the Indian capitalists enter into unrestricted or less restricted control. The capitalist ladies and their men-folk who have no sympathy for non-political prisoners will not find it difficult to adopt towards the workers the brutality inseparable from the suppression of one class by another. By that time they will have finished using the Indian workers as tools in the campaign against the British Government, and the mask will be taken off.

What the non-political prisoners think of the well-bred inhumanity of the arrogant ladies we do not know. P. S.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*F. R. B.*—If you will give your name and address, not necessarily for publication, we will reply to your letter.

*Mr. Arthur Marley.*—Letters returned by the Post Office marked "insufficient address." If you will give your full address we shall be able to reply.

*B. F. (S.W.I.)*—No articles are published in the SOCIALIST STANDARD unless they are in harmony with the Party's position.

*"Prophet Smith."*—See paragraph headed "Capitalism's Crises." Does this meet your point?

*J. T. Walton Newbold, "Bari," and others.*—Letters crowded out of this issue owing to pressure on space. ED., COMM.

#### NEW BRANCH AT BIRKENHEAD.

As a result of consistent open-air propaganda in Birkenhead a branch of the Party has been formed.

Sympathisers desiring to join or wishing for further information, are invited to communicate with the Secretary, EDMUND HOWARTH, 60, Park Road South, Birkenhead.

Propaganda meetings are held every Sunday, 8 p.m., at the Main Entrance, Birkenhead Park, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD and Party pamphlets are on sale.

#### FULHAM.

Members and sympathisers willing to co-operate in forming a branch are asked to communicate with the General Secretary, at 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

#### OUR DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

If you agree with the point of view put forward in the articles, turn to the Declaration of Principles on the back page and study them.

### The Australian Labour Leaders

#### Whom do they Serve?

In analysing political activities, one cannot place the critical finger on every economic detail underlying the legislative enactments of the various political parties. To those who recognise the connection between economic interests and political parties there is, however, sufficient general data available to allow of the tracing back, over a period of time, of the interests served.

As the accumulation of this data is not always possible until the political scene is almost completely changed, the analysis must, to a certain extent, lag behind the main events. But once having discovered the source of action, we can follow its flow through the medium of statistics, Parliamentary reports, and Press statements concerning the matters under review.

Due to the inherent contradictions of capitalism, the position in Australia, as in most countries of the world, became acute in 1929. The national income fell from £650 millions in 1928 to £564 millions in 1929. While the total revenue from taxation for the Commonwealth and the various States amounted to £88½ millions, the interest on the National debt runs into £55 millions per annum and all other expenditure, excluding Railways and Tramways, amounts to £42 millions. Every State Government and the Federal Government shows a deficit. Loans were maturing and with falling prices, due to "over-production," the prospect was not pleasing to the capitalists of this country. Each section was fighting frantically to save itself by political wire-pulling. But taxes had to be found and the Bruce-Page Nationalist Government decided to place the burden on the moving picture interests. The latter had sufficient support among the Nationalists to bring about the defeat of the Government.

#### A "Labour" Government Returned

Using "the preservation of Arbitration" and the protection of the living standard as a catch-cry, the Scullin Labour crowd were successful in gaining the confidence of the workers. They began grappling with the problems. It is here we get an insight into the real nature of the "Labour" Party. Under the slogan of "Build up Australian Industries," benefits were gratuitously bestowed upon the Australian manufacturers, and the workers were callously disregarded.

The tariffs were revised, and more than 150 items were adjusted in the interests of the sections of the capitalist class represented by the "Labour" Party. Here are a few of the most glaring examples of the safeguarding of markets for the local manufacturers:—

#### GOODS IMPORTED.

Item.	1928-9.		1930-1.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
Confectionery	1,794,277 lb.	£137,524	117,025 lb.	£9,482
Dried Fruits ...	1,844,985 lb.	£45,914	39,704 lb.	£1,332
Cornflour ...	1,032,463 lb.	£10,000	10 lb.	£1
Meats (presvd.)	1,539,993 lb.	£78,212	127,744 lb.	£7,456
Soap and Soap Substitutes...	1,096,946 lb.	£116,050	435,911 lb.	£13,288
Tobacco (mfrd.)	1,070,251 lb.	£158,788	330,552 lb.	£44,857
Cigars, Cigarettes	1,128,206 lb.	£628,276	207,684 lb.	£106,313
Matches gross boxes	1,033,014 lb.	£159,304	8,772 lb.	£1,615
Potable spirits, gallons	1,510,558 lb.	£1,599,600	425,835 lb.	£475,116

Here we see the enormous market thrown open to the interests served by the Labour Party. But the services did not end here. During the last year of its régime the "Premier's Plan" was introduced. Under this plan, on the plea of reducing government expense, the wages of public servants were ruthlessly reduced. Pensions of ex-soldiers and old people were chopped by 12½ per cent., and the maternity allowance was cut down similarly.

The wages of all workers governed by Arbitration Court Awards were reduced by 10 per cent. In some of the State concerns pay was cut down by 22½ per cent. In addition, rationing was introduced in almost every Government and private concern, and unemployment increased rapidly. Although many Trade Union officials had backed the new tariffs, no protection by legislation was given to their members, and many of the industries served by the Government's policy took advantage of the depression by further fleecing their workers. The Arbitration Court, which Scullin said would protect the living standards, was used as a means to brazenly filch gains bitterly fought for in the past.

#### The Position Grows Worse.

With hopes of strengthening the position of the Government financially, Mr. Theodore had made several attempts to introduce his monetary schemes. An attempt to establish a Central Reserve Bank was frustrated by the Private Banks through the Nationalist Party. A twenty million pounds fiduciary note issue was also blocked. In the meantime, Lang, in N.S.W., was endeavouring to serve the local manufacturers by the introduction of the "Lang Plan." Anticipating constitutional difficulties, he managed to get two new Judges on the High Court bench, from whom he expected return favours. Striving for power in the Federal arena, the Lang Labour Party ousted the Scullin-Theodore Federal Government. Challenging the latter on the distribution of unemployment relief in the Theodore electorate, they moved on the matter in the House, and with the support of the Nationalists

the Scullin crowd were defeated. At the ensuing election, the Nationalists, under their latest nom-de-politics, the United Australia Party, were returned by an overwhelming majority. The U.A.P. is composed of all sorts of political junk, including Labour rats, such as Lyons and Fenton, and Wm. Morris Hughes is back in the fold.

The U.A.P. immediately began to serve their capitalist backers by undoing the legislation introduced by the Labour Party in the interests of the rival capitalist interests which back them.

Following on the wage reducing policy of the Labour Party, the U.A.P. has introduced the "Experts' Plan," which goes much further than the "Premier's Plan." And the game goes on. In Victoria the Labour Party, after an ignominious period of office, split, went to the polls, and was defeated. In N.S.W. the Lang Party, rather than withdraw a circular which was no longer necessary once the Mortgage Bill was through, gave the State Governor the excuse for dismissing the Government. Here also the State Labour Party was defeated by the combined forces of the Federal Labour Party and the U.A.P. In Queensland the Labour Party managed to scramble back in spite of a redistribution of seats brought about by the Nationalist Party.

#### Where Do The Workers Come In?

Through all the political shuffling the conditions of the workers have become terrible indeed. 400,000 unemployed eking out their existence on a dole from 5s. per week for single men to 21s. per week for families of ten!

And yet the workers return parties pledged to maintain this sorry state of affairs. If we look for the reason it is not hard to find. Members of the Labour Party and of the Communist Party claim that the blame rests with the "leaders," who have betrayed the masses. This is simply another way of stating the actual fact, viz., that the workers willingly placed their trust in men instead of principles. Did the workers understand their class position and act accordingly, all the leaders in the world would make no difference, because the workers would not blindly follow as they do now. When the workers understand that their slave condition is inseparable from capitalism they will know what to do with both capitalism and "leaders." That understanding can come only through a knowledge of Socialism, and until they are organised in a Socialist Party in sufficient numbers to institute a change, poverty will prevail, the conditions of the working class will become worse, Labour Parties will continue to represent capitalist interests and anti-working class parties will have the power with which to keep in subjection the working class. Workers, what are you doing about it?

W. J. CLARKE,  
Socialist Party of Australia.



## The Coming Election in the U.S.A.

The two great burlesque shows recently held in Chicago are now things of the past—the conventions of the two major political parties in the United States to nominate their respective candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President, and to frame their respective platforms with which each party hopes to capture political power in the coming elections in November.

An important reason why these conventions were held in that city is that the business organisations of Chicago, through their Chamber of Commerce, offered both the Democratic and Republican parties an inducement of 100,000 dollars to defray expenses. This was done because the business interests of the city of the "Jungle" saw in these conventions a means of increasing business for themselves. The city fathers of Chicago decided to make doubly certain that their investment would reap profit by asking both parties to prolong their gatherings as long as possible.

The shows opened like most shows, with lots of previous publicity. Nothing was missing, brass bands, bathing beauties, and, of course, the spellbinders, religious as well as political.

The conventions followed each other within an interval of a few days, both introducing their business with the aid of an attendant sky pilot who, as the agent of the Lord, did solicit this ubiquitous but invisible party to lend his divine wisdom to those convened for the important mission they were about to perform. But, according to some reports, the sky pilot's request could never have reached the heavenly abode, for it is said that the chairman at one of these gatherings stated that he could not see how God would be able to do his part of the job "with such a hell of a noise among the delegates."

In selecting their nominees for office and framing their political platforms, besides the incidental catch-cries, the delegates keep their eyes fixed on the political horizon and size up the prospects of capturing political office. The nominees selected for President and Vice-President are individuals whom the delegates believe will capture the most votes on the strength of their "personality" and reputation.

The Republicans selected Herbert Hoover and Charles Curtis, the present incumbents in office, whilst the Democrats chose Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of the State of New York, and Nance Garner, Representative from Texas and Speaker of that House, to fill these two jobs.

When the parties had selected their standard bearers the next task was to rally the voters around them. A platform had to be drawn up on the "bees and honey" principle of selecting the issues which are already troubling the minds of the electorate.

The question of how to bring back "prosperity" is foremost in the minds of the electorate, and both parties frame their platforms accordingly.

To a large section of the working class "prosperity" means being able to get jobs again. For the capitalist class it means the promise of more profit.

Another reason why the various capitalist groups are so anxious for political power is their desire to have a say in raising taxes.

With millions of wage slaves without means of selling their energies, and thus being deprived of the necessities of life, there is always a danger that these hungry hordes might attack capitalist property. The capitalists realise this, and are compelled to make some sort of provision for these potentially dangerous slaves, by taking part of the wealth they have stolen from the slaves and giving it back to them in the form of bread-lines, soup-kitchens, doles, and the like. The New York *Daily Mirror* brought out this aspect in the following:—

"Huge food reserves ordered for 'needy,' 'Governor plans loan funds for idle,' 'Preachers demand cure for idleness,' '\$6,000,000 drive for idle.' These items are spread over the front pages of many newspapers in the country. And they are only a meagre indication of the misery and unrest that millions are experiencing. Few people of wealth should give now 'until it hurts.' They should give as a matter of self-preservation."

When private charity proved insufficient, the authorities had to step in and make provision, out of resources already depleted owing to the declining yield from the existing taxes—a feature of every trade depression.

Consequently many of the capitalists and their political representatives turn to the "liquor question" and see in this the "magic fluid" which will turn to gold. Many of them who only a few years ago saw in alcohol "the degeneracy of a nation," now see in it life-giving properties. But they are not unanimous in their acclaim for "light wines and beer." There are among them some who, whilst they would like to see a revival of the liquor business for the revenues that can be obtained from it, yet, being professional politicians, see also the danger of jeopardising their sinecures by antagonising the "drys." This is very noticeable in the Republican Party, and as a result of such a condition, the party's attitude on the liquor question resulted in a "straddle"—State Option.

This was the most important part of the Republican Party's convention, and the rest was devoted to oratory and some horseplay. There was much talk about the need for a "new spiritual awakening," and the "realisation of new values," besides lots of other equally empty

abstract talk which will soon be forgotten in the heat of the election campaign.

The Democratic convention came out almost solidly for the repeal of the 18th Amendment (which was expected from the party who in the Northern and Eastern states has long been "wet"). They expect to draw from the other major party many votes of those who are dissatisfied with that party's straddle on this question.

The Democrats dealt also with the problem of taxation, and agreed unanimously that the repeal of the 18th Amendment and consequently the legalisation of beer and wine-selling was the way out of this capitalist difficulty. "Make the brewers pay," is the Democratic slogan, and with the brewers paying, part of the burden of taxation will be put on to their shoulders. Also, we must not forget that with the legalisation of the sale of light wines and beer, the expenditure of the government on its army of "snoopers" and "stool pigeons" who are now engaged in attempting to enforce the 18th Amendment, will be wiped out. After much jubilation, much singing, and we suspect, a little passing of the "cup that cheers" within the seclusion of hotel bathrooms, the convention of the Democratic Party ended.

For the workers there is nothing to choose between these two parties. They both stand for capitalism. It has been shown that many capitalists support both parties, and evidence has been offered in the press that both parties draw finances from the same sources. The capitalists who finance both parties at the same time wish to be doubly certain that whichever party gets political power, their particular interests will be looked after.

The ruling class know that to obtain political power they must have the aid of the working class, as this class is numerically the strongest. These conventions, with all of their publicity, are part of the means to stir up in the working class a certain interest in political activity. So the capitalist politicians bring up at such conventions the different issues—some of importance to workers—and then with the aid of their professional spellbinders and writers, attempt to side-track and enlist the sympathy of the workers—and get their votes.

The conditions of the working class arise out of the social relationships in modern society. This class is forced by necessity to enter into a certain definite relationship with the capitalist class. As the latter class own the means of production—the means of life—the working class is compelled to sell its energies to the owners in order to gain access to the means of life. In exchange for their energies the workers get wages. It is due to this condition that poverty and misery exist among the workers.

The control of the machinery of government, in-

cluding the armed forces, is essential to the capitalist or property owning class to enable them to deal with the problems that confront them.

There is, for example, the need for the capitalist class of the United States to protect themselves from the encroachments of capitalists of other countries who may attempt to "muscle in" on the preserves of our masters' country. Again, new markets are sought in which to sell the surplus products that the limited purchasing power of the American workers will not enable them to buy. This struggle for markets is keen among the various capitalist national groups throughout the world. Who shall get the markets often resolves itself into which group can muster the strongest force, and when the trickery of diplomacy fails, the force of armaments decides.

Then, again, there is the struggle between the workers and the capitalists over the division of the wealth produced by the workers. The more the capitalist system develops, the clearer become the contrasts between the two classes, and with it the likelihood of periodical outbursts of industrial strife.

As the workers' understanding grows, the difficulty of stifling their discontent correspondingly increases. To deal with this there are, apart from the regular army and navy and air force, also such organisations as the "National Guards," the "Citizens' Military Training Corps," etc. Besides these we have the police departments, and private agencies such as the "Burns" and "Pinkertons," all of which are used to suppress any of the smaller uprisings of workers, and which are also used as spies and stool-pigeons to weed out and fire those workers who desire to organise against their oppressive conditions.

Still another capitalist problem is the existence of the "criminal" elements which this social system breeds so freely. The uncertain conditions of the working class, and even of some of the smaller fry of capitalists, demoralises many into trying to live by means that are contrary to capitalist property laws.

What has been written above shows that the capitalists, in order to run their system, must needs have a government to enable them to enforce their kind of order, so that the conditions essential to the exploitation of the slave class can be continued. Thus it is that they are prepared to spend large sums of money running into many millions of dollars for the purpose of winning elections. Yet we know that no matter which capitalist party obtains the powers of government, their supreme interests as a class will be served. Individual and group differences there are, but basically all of these differences are as nothing when the difference between capitalist and worker comes into prominence. Then the common aim of the capitalist class is shown, and that is, to maintain the present social system.



It should be clear to all workers that the working class, if they are to escape from the misery of capitalism, must first understand their class position, and must then build up a Socialist political party for the purpose of capturing the powers of government in order to introduce Socialism.

This is the only solution of the economic problems of the working class. All else will leave them wage-slaves still. **TAFFY BROWN,**  
Workers' Socialist Party of the U.S.

## NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES.

### EAST LONDON.

A Meeting will be held at POPLAR TOWN HALL on Sunday, October 2nd, at 8 p.m.  
Speaker ... **E. Wilmott.**  
Subject ... **"The Case for Capitalism."**  
All invited. Questions and discussion. Admission free.

### POPLAR.

A Meeting will be held at POPLAR TOWN HALL on Sunday, November 6th.  
Speaker ... **A. Kohn.**  
Subject ... **"The End of the Wages System."**  
Non-members invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion. Commence 8 p.m.

### BETHNAL GREEN.

An Indoor Meeting will be held at BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY on Friday, October 14th, at 8 p.m.  
Speaker ... **G. Bellingham.**  
Subject ... **"Reform or Revolution."**  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion.

### NOTTINGHAM.

A Lecture on "Socialism and Political Action" will be given by **A. Kohn**, on Sunday, November 6th, at 2.30 p.m., at the LECTURE THEATRE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, Shakespeare Street, under the auspices of the Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society.  
Admission free. Questions and discussion. Open to all.

### DONCASTER.

Open-air Meetings are held on Saturday Evenings, at 7 p.m., in the MARKET SQUARE.  
The "Socialist Standard" and other Party Literature is on sale.  
Further information may be obtained from Edward Littler, 27, Broughton Avenue, Doncaster.

### HACKNEY.

SOCIAL.—A Social will be held at 14a, GRAHAM ROAD (Front Room), on Saturday, October 8th, at 8 p.m. Admission free. Collection.  
Refreshments can be obtained on the premises.

### LEYTON.

A Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 23rd, at 7.30 p.m., at GROVE HOUSE, HIGH ROAD, LEYTON.  
Speaker ... **E. Hardy.**  
Subject ... **"The Need for Working Class Unity."**  
Admission free. Questions and discussion. All invited. Doors open 7 p.m.

### SUNDAY MEETINGS AT HEAD OFFICE.

Meetings are held every Sunday evening at 8 p.m., at 42, GREAT DOVER STREET.

Date.	Speaker.	Subject.
Oct. 2	<b>A. Kohn</b>	<b>"Socialism and the State."</b>
" 9	<b>Gilmac</b>	<b>"Materialist Conception of History."</b>
" 16	<b>Ginsberg</b>	<b>"Class War Tactics."</b>
" 23	<b>"Sandy"</b>	<b>"The Case for Socialism."</b>
" 30	<b>D. Goldberg</b>	<b>"The Socialist Position To-day."</b>

Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion.

## A Little Talk About Our Innards.

How often has it been said, "The Hour brings forth the Man." This vivid truism, exemplified equally in the decline and fall of the Roman Empire and the productions of Laurel and Hardy, is again given point by recent world happenings. Out of a maelstrom of chaos, out of the cataclysmic roar of a world falling to ruin, comes a firm, strong voice. It is the voice, calm, clear and courageous, of one who peers through the surging mists of doom, and discerns with supernatural clarity—the Way Out. Students of political science will have gathered by now, that all indications point to Mr. George Lansbury. They are quite right. The Hour has produced the Man. How wonderful are the ways of Providence!

A short while ago, we, in our ignorance, informed a long-suffering world that "Capitalism will not Collapse." We charged a penny for some 16 pages of our reasons. We might have saved our energy. In the columns of the August *Bow and Bromley Citizen*, Mr. Lansbury says Capitalism is at the end of its tether. Civilisation is dying, he said. The economic plight of Central Europe, the upheaval in Germany, the failure of the Disarmament Conference, the tariff war against the Irish Free State in the cause of what is known as punctilio, and the persecution in India, cause him to despair. He asks us to "couple" with these, unemployment at home, the mean Means Test inflicted by the Tory Government (but, George, you forget to say that it is the same test as that applied by the Labour Government for Poor Law purposes), and the driving down into the pit of destitution of myriads of aged and infirm. And then we come to the prophetic utterance:

Men and women in every walk of life are asking what can be done. I reply, not in the words of economists or Socialists, but in the words of Him who spoke as never man spoke before:—

"Let him who is greatest be the least. Seek the Kingdom of God which is within you. Seek not your own, learn of Him that the law of life is service, and that it is not the will of the Father that the least of His little ones should perish."

And learn, also, that on one occasion when He was angry, He took whips and thrashed the money lords, the usurers, the devourer of widows' houses, out of the Temple.

So there you are; everyone now knows what to do. As George so truly says: men and women are asking what can be done.

We of the Socialist Party of Great Britain have answered "capture political power, so that you can own your means of living." The Labour Party, whose leader is Mr. Lansbury, answered, "the most important thing is to get something now." After a quarter of a century's getting something now, Mr. Lansbury now replies with: Seek not your own . . . "Seek the Kingdom of God, which is within you."

It is really too brilliant. What balm, after more

than two years of Labour Government: "Seek not your own. Seek the Kingdom of God. It's inside you." Most of the unemployed would swap it for a steak and kidney pudding, any time.

The bit about the whipping of the usurers and money lords is interesting. Mr. Lansbury has not always been in favour of giving the usurers a walloping. When the usurers who had invested in War Loan engaged in the operation known as Conversion, two months back, Mr. Lansbury gladly lent them a hand. On that occasion the readers of the *Bow and Bromley Citizen* were spared the tripe and treacle of our Right Hon. friend. On July 14th he was accorded the publicity of the B.B.C., and millions of listeners heard him say:

I am speaking to you on behalf of my colleagues in the House of Commons and myself. . . . We are glad to be able to give our support to the War Loan Conversion scheme recently launched by the Government.

Then came the usual bowl of greasy platitudes, followed by George's inevitable appeal to:

turn once again to Him who taught as no other man has taught, and start individually and nationally ordering our lives on His appeal, and seek first the Kingdom of God, which He also said is within you.

George seems somewhat muddled, but doubtless he could explain himself. Seek first the Kingdom of God, and to save a protracted search he indicates its precise position—within you. Then, keeping in mind what Christ thought of usurers on a former occasion, carefully order your usurious investments in War Loan—the price of slaughter—so that you will continue to draw interest, or money for nothing.

Pretty dreadful, isn't it! The *Listener* of July 20th reprinted his wonderful effort, so that posterity may better know the kind of Man whom Fate threw up at this great hour of crisis.

W. T. H.

## Confusion in British Columbia.

Earlier in the year the Socialist Party of Canada was formed, based on our Declaration of Principles, and with headquarters in Winnipeg. Shortly afterwards it was reported in the *O.B.U. Bulletin* (June 30th, 1932) that the I.L.P. of British Columbia had changed its name to the Socialist Party of Canada. A member of the latter body claimed in the same issue of the *O.B.U. Bulletin* that for the past two years the I.L.P. in British Columbia had been a strictly Socialist Party, and not open to the criticisms rightly levelled against the I.L.P. elsewhere in Canada. Had this been true the obvious course would have been for the two Socialist Parties of Canada to join forces, but later information has shown that the British Columbia body has changed nothing except its name. What motive the pro-

motors had, except the desire to escape the discredit associated with the name I.L.P. we do not know, but there is no room for doubt about the anti-Socialist character of the organisation. In November, 1931, it ran candidates at a municipal election. The eight points of their programme mainly concerned the details of municipal administration, and contained no reference whatever to Socialism. Municipal control of public utilities was one demand. Another was "efficient organisation of our relief department." As this headed the list it was presumably regarded as the most important. (See *O.B.U. Bulletin*, July 21st.)

The Vancouver District Council of the so-called Socialist Party of Canada, on June 16th, passed a resolution laying down policy for the City Council. This also contained no reference to Socialism. One funny passage in it instructs the Party's representatives to be "non-committal" on the question of legalised sweepstakes (*O.B.U. Bulletin*, July 21st).

This fraudulent "Socialist Party" has published the first issue of a monthly journal, *The British Columbia Clarion*. It reports a "Western Conference of Political Labor Parties," held at Calgary on July 30th, and attended by the Party's own delegates, as well as by delegates of the I.L.P. in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and of the United Farmers of Canada. The Conference formed a National Labour Party described as "The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Farmer, Labor, Socialist)," of which the "Socialist Party" will form a part. The *Clarion* contains many references to Marx, but is quite lacking in a grasp of the Socialist position. The printed Constitution of the party carefully prepared the way for the alliance with the I.L.P. and the farmers' groups by declaring in Clause (1) that members shall not be allowed to retain membership of another political party, "except under special circumstances, at the discretion of the Provincial Executive." Another clause allows the Provincial Executive to give "special permission" for members and branches to support or endorse candidates "other than an official nominee of the Party."

In short, the British Columbia so-called Socialist Party bears every sign that it is being run by typical Labour leaders "on the make," misusing the name of Socialism to mislead politically inexperienced workers. **ED. COMM.**

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All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard

OCTOBER



1932

## The Boll Weevil Lets Us Down.

But for the crazy social system under which goods are produced for sale at a profit and not for use, the human race would have cause to welcome bumper crops of its cultivated plants. Capitalism does not permit the matter to be viewed so simply. Because of the private interests of the owners of the means of life we witness the paradox of organisations being formed to restrict production and destroy goods in order to keep up prices, although millions of people are in need of the goods in question. During the periodic crises through which capitalism inevitably passes, when prices are forced down below a profitable level owing to the superabundance of stocks in relation to the demands of the market, it is quite a commonplace for statesmen and business men to pin their hopes for trade improvement on crop failures which will curtail the supply. The Boll Weevil which destroys the cotton crops has often come to the aid of merchants and speculators hoping for scarcity and rising prices, but in the United States this year the Boll Weevil has not done his best. Whether he was worried and put off his stroke by the confusing babble of advice of the politicians and economic experts, some saying "spend more" and others "spend less," some saying "we must produce more," others "we must cut down production," or whether it is deliberate ca'cannying provoked by agitators it is not possible to say with certainty. But the facts are plain. The Boll Weevil, after promising well earlier in the season, turned out to be a "jibber," and has earned the merited disapproval of *The*

*Times*. The "New York" correspondent (September 12th) writes as follows:—

Commodity prices, after the recent advance, lost some ground last week, and the Stock Market was quick to reflect the change, particularly the sharp fall in raw cotton after publication of the Government's estimate of the crop as on September 1. The estimate was virtually the same as that of a month before, but although it was about a million bales smaller than the generality of estimates in the trade it was still found disappointing. The boll weevil, it seemed, had done much less than was expected of him.

Why not a campaign for bigger and better Boll Weevils? This is a job the scientists might attend to.

## Lord Wolmer and Socialism.

Lord Wolmer's recent book ("Post Office Reform"), in which he attacks the present organisation of the Post Office and demands that it be handed over to a public utility corporation and be managed by business men, has a certain interest for Socialists, although we are not the least bit concerned with the question whether the Post Office should remain as it is or be handed over to a private company or public utility corporation. What interests us is Lord Wolmer's belief that in attacking nationalisation he is attacking Marx. (See Chapter IX, "The Problem of Socialised Industry," particularly p. 281.) To be fair to Lord Wolmer it is hardly his fault that he does not know any better. How should he know what Socialism means when his knowledge of the subject is probably limited to the printed and spoken propaganda of the Labour Party? Misled by this, Lord Wolmer supposes quite naturally that the "problem of socialised industry" is the fight between that wing of the Labour Party which stands by the old demand for Capitalism on State enterprise lines like the Post Office and the other wing—represented by Herbert Morrison, Major Attlee and others—which wants its Capitalism run on public utility lines. That issue is of interest to the capitalists who line up with the two groups, but it has nothing whatever to do with Marx and Socialism.

## NEW PAMPHLET

## The Socialist Party of Great Britain AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

Deals with the founding of the Socialist Party, the Liberal, Tory, Labour and Communist parties and the I.L.P., the Russian Dictatorship, War, Trade Unions, Social Reforms, etc.  
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## Mr. Middleton Murry Protests.

The letter below, written by Mr. Middleton Murry, refers to a paragraph in the September *SOCIALIST STANDARD*:—

Larling, nr. Norwich.  
September 3, 1932.

Sir,

Your reference to me in the September *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is partly false, and partly misleading. I must ask you to publish this note.

I have never had "leanings towards the Communist Party"; nor have I ever been "a worshipper of Russia." I have never "quarrelled with the Communists" in the sense your statement bears. I have had no connection of any kind with the C.P.

I joined the I.L.P. in December last. In or about March this year I read a very sensible pamphlet published by the S.P.G.B.: "Why Capitalism will not Collapse." Until that moment I had never even heard of the existence of the S.P.G.B. Since I agreed with its view that the expectation of a melodramatic collapse of Capitalism was mistaken and dangerous, I thought I ought to learn more about the S.P.G.B. In the letter in which I asked for information I used the phrase which you, rather disingenuously, quote: "It seems to me that I ought to join."

I was surprised to discover that the constitution of the S.P.G.B. forbids its members to be members of the I.L.P. So I went no further into the matter. The restriction seemed to me stupid in itself, and, as my knowledge of the S.P.G.B. grew, indicative of a fundamental limitation in an otherwise valuable organisation. To represent me as having wavered between the C.P., the S.P.G.B., and the I.L.P., is quite false.

For my part I have to apologise to the S.P.G.B. for having implied that it was not a "genuinely Socialist organisation." I am sorry to say that I had forgotten all about it when I made my remark about the I.L.P.

I will not take up your space, or my time, in replying to your assertions that I understand nothing about Socialism, because in one passage I say that the essence of it is "economic equality." "Economic equality" is as much the essence of Socialism as "the common ownership of the means of production." You cannot get "economic equality" without establishing "the common ownership of the means of production." Economic equality is the ethical aspect, common ownership of the means of production the economic basis, of a Socialist society.

It is the singular and distressing rigidity of mind revealed in so superficial a criticism that it made it easy for me to forget the claims of the S.P.G.B. to be a genuinely Socialist organisation.

Yours faithfully,

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

Reply.

Mr. Murry's letter does not justify his assertion that the references to him were "partly false and partly misleading," except, perhaps, in respect of his attitude towards the Communist Party. The statement about the Communists to which he takes exception was this:—"He appears at first to have had leanings towards the Communist Party, and is still a worshipper of Russia, being under the impression that Socialism is being built up in that country."

The writer of the offending paragraph appears to have been wrong in supposing that Mr. Murry's leanings towards Communist doctrine had ever included a sympathy with the Communist Party

in Great Britain. Mr. Murry defines his position in his book, "The Necessity of Communism." In it he says (p. 15): "Leninism is . . . valid for Russia, ridiculous in England."

In the *Adelphi* (August) he goes further and declares that it should be the function of the I.L.P. to build up

something analogous to the Communist Party in Russia, the inward nucleus of convinced Socialists "whose creed carries conviction because they live in accordance with it."

(Having accepted Mr. Murry's explanation of his attitude, it is necessary to point out that we certainly do not accept the argument that a whole body of theory for working class action can be valid in one country and ridiculous in another.)

Mr. Murry goes on to say that he has never been "a worshipper of Russia," but he omits the second part of the passage, which reads, "under the impression that Socialism is being built up in that country." His half-denial, therefore, leaves his attitude still undefined. The fact is that Mr. Middleton Murry's party (the I.L.P.) commits itself unreservedly to the delusion that Socialism is being built up in Russia. If Mr. Murry shares his party's view then he ought to be a "worshipper of Russia."

The explanation given by Mr. Murry for liking and disliking the S.P.G.B. well illustrates his muddled state of mind. He says that after reading our pamphlet, "Why Capitalism will not Collapse," he wrote to us saying "It seems to me that I ought to join"; but was then surprised to discover that the constitution of the S.P.G.B. forbids its members to belong to the I.L.P. If Mr. Murry had read the pamphlet with ordinary care he would have seen that it states and explains the hostility to the I.L.P. which he did not discover until after he had written to us commending the pamphlet and its attitude.

He calls the S.P.G.B.'s refusal to permit membership of the I.L.P. "stupid in itself . . . and indicative of a fundamental limitation in an otherwise valuable organisation." Now, at the time Mr. Murry made this discovery, the I.L.P. was in the Labour Party, and membership of the I.L.P., therefore, meant also membership of the Labour Party. So Mr. Murry's view was that it was "stupid in itself" that a Socialist Party should not allow its members to be in the Labour Party. But since that time, and with Mr. Murry's wholehearted approval, the I.L.P. itself has left the Labour Party and has imposed precisely the same "stupid restriction." It now expels any member who belongs to the Labour Party.

Mr. Murry stands by his statement that the essence of Socialism is "economic equality." The danger of such a phrase is that it is acceptable to people who utterly reject the demand for the common ownership of the means of production. No better example could be found than Mr. Tawney,



of whom Mr. Murry wrote that he is a "genuine Socialist." Mr. Tawney is a believer in "true economic equality," as defined and explained by him. Yet in his "Acquisitive Society" (p. 99) Mr. Tawney writes:—

The idea of some socialists that private property in land or capital is necessarily mischievous is a piece of scholastic pedantry as absurd as that of the Conservatives who would invest all property with some kind of mysterious sanctity.

(Mr. Tawney is here discussing current problems, not the historical evolution of private property.)

Mr. Bernard Shaw is another advocate of "economic equality" who manages at the same time to be an opponent of common ownership, a supporter of capitalist wars, and of State capitalism, and an admirer of Mussolini.

Mr. Murry's reasons for his disregard of the S.P.G.B. when he wrote of the I.L.P. as the only Socialist organisation in this country are quite unconvincing. First he says that he had forgotten all about the S.P.G.B. when he made his remark about the I.L.P. Then later on he says that it is the rigidity of the S.P.G.B. which "made it easy for me to forget the claims of the S.P.G.B. to be a genuinely Socialist organisation." If Mr. Murry (who has the SOCIALIST STANDARD by post each month) forgot the existence of the S.P.G.B. how could he remember its alleged rigidity? And if he remembered the rigidity how could that make it easy for him to forget its claims that it is genuinely Socialist? Does Mr. Murry mean that he remembered it, but thought that it claims to be something other than genuinely Socialist? If not, what does he mean?

And if Mr. Murry forgot the S.P.G.B., did he also "forget" to reply to a letter sent to him on the same subject on August 4th? And then "forget" again at the end of the month to refer to the matter in the September issue of *Adelphi*? If Mr. Murry's memory works like this he should be grateful to us for having used a well-known specific in the shape of a little publicity to jolt it into activity.

H.

#### North West London.

Will members and sympathisers willing to co-operate in the formation of a branch in North West London communicate with Mr. G. Beeson, 56, Barnfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware; Mr. W. Edgley, 41, Brett Road, Stonebridge Park, N.W.10; or Mr. H. G. Holt, 36, Rosebank Avenue, Sudbury, Wembley.

#### Leeds.

Meetings are held on Sunday evenings at 7 p.m., in Victoria Square, at which announcements concerning indoor meetings will be made. Watch for local announcements.

### Matters Underground.

Since early this year, a wage cut of 2½ per cent. on all earnings has hung over the heads of the employees of the London Traffic Combine. The need for reducing expenses owing to the crisis, and the falling off of traffic are the reasons given, and a desire to cut the suit to the cloth. In other words the employers are pleading their "poverty."

It is generally admitted that the Combine is one of the most efficient and prosperous concerns in Britain, but before we condemn the cry of poverty as a fraud, it will do no harm to glance at the results of the past few years. For this purpose we will quote from a pamphlet, "The London Traffic Combine," issued by the Labour Research Dept., Doughty Street, London, W.C., at the beginning of the year.

Let us take the District Railway first. It does not look too bad:—

	1927.	1929.	1931.
Profit in £1,000's	369	490	458
Dividend %	4	5	4½

Now for the basis (of control) of the combine—the tubes. Here no competition is to be feared, owing to their enormous cost and the need for Parliamentary powers, hence the dividend hunters and bondholders have swarmed round these like flies. Let us see the dividends paid and net profits of these concerns:—

	1927.	1929.	1931.
London Electric	4%	5%	4%
Central London	4%	5%	5%
City & South London	4%	5%	4½%
Net Profit in £1,000's.			

	1927.	1929.	1931.
London Electric	633	695	636
Central London	210	188	187
City & South London	131	122	126

Also let us see the percentage of "working expenses per train-mile" to "traffic receipts":—

Company.	C.G.L.	L.E.R.	District.	C.L.R.
1926	54	60	68	66
1930	59	53½	64	62

Such are the "mounting expenses" of the tubes and their poverty.

Now for the 'buses; much the same story as before:—

	1927.	1929.	1931.
Profit in £1,000's	608	671	740
Dividend, tax free	7%	8%	6¾%
Operating cost % of traffic receipts	94	93.3	93.1

In addition, the Combine has controlling interest in Overground, Ltd., and a working agreement with Tilling & British Automobile Traction Co., Ltd., and in the outer area it formed Green Line coaches to drive other operators off the roads.

Now for the trams. These consist of the London United, Metropolitan Electric, the Tramways (M.E.T.) Omnibus Co., and the South Met. Electric Tram and Lighting Co. All except the last have not paid a dividend on the ordinary shares for some time, probably owing to their being used as feeders to the tubes or the traffic being "squeezed" to the 'buses; but the last-named concern has, since 1924, paid 5 per cent. This, on the face of it, looks bad, but the company controlling the tram undertakings (the London & Suburban Traction Co.) does not seem to be doing too badly; the profits during the last few years mounting steadily:—1927, £24,920; 1929, £60,864, and 1930, £89,640.

So far in our review, the net profits and dividends on ordinary shares have been shown. There are other shares as well, but we will pass them by for this article and have a look at the debenture holders, whose interest must be met before the others receive anything. In 1931, the L.G.O.C. loan capital totalled £5,561,000, and absorbed £276,500 for the year (4s. 3d. per week for every L.G.O.C. worker). But the tube bondholders draw the lion's share. They carry a loan capital of over £36-millions, and draw an annual charge of £1,720,000 (or £3 6s. per week for every railman employed on the tubes). In addition, various means of speeding up and displacing workers are being resorted to with the view to increased profits: faster and heavier trams and 'buses, faster and longer trains, with appliances for doing away with gatemen, liftmen, signalmen, ticket examiners, etc., and in view of this it can be safely said that the Combine's plea of "poverty" is not made out.

Matters came to a head with a demand for wage reductions and further speeding up during September. The men declare that the speeding up is not safe, but the L.G.O.C. refused to withdraw from the position they had taken up. (*Daily Herald*, August 25th). After some negotiations the men's delegates finally agreed by 39 votes to 21 to accept revised terms presented by the Company and recommended for acceptance by the Union. Although the demand for reduced wages was withdrawn, the new speed schedules will themselves involve some reduction in earnings. But according to the Labour Correspondent of the *News-Chronicle* (September 23rd) no one knows exactly what the effect will be. On one route, however, it is claimed that the new schedules will mean a loss of 8s. a week overtime pay. The Company promise to reconsider the matter in nine months' time, but what exactly this means is not clear. The men fear that the acceleration will be used to reduce the number of 'buses on the streets, and that the medical boards will get rid of redundant staffs by scrapping the older men.

We ask the workers in this and every other

industry to note that such disputes will happen again and again so long as capitalism is allowed to continue. Why not set about ending the system that robs you? Come to our meetings, hear our case, and question our speakers.

Get hold of our literature and think it over. Then, if you think we come up to what is required, join us. You will be welcomed, and will find plenty to do in the cause of Socialism. That is the only effective reply to the traffic or any other combine.

C. V. R.

#### CORRECTION.

##### "The Truth about the Co-operative Movement."

The writer of the article under the above heading, published in the September issue, asks us to state that an error crept in. It was asserted that each member of the Co-operative Societies spends on an average only £10 a year in the Co-operative stores. This should have been "each member and dependant," making the expenditure per family about £30 a year. This weakens somewhat the argument which was based on the figures given, but it is still obvious that Co-operators spend a large part of their money elsewhere than at Co-operative stores. Allowance has to be made for the fact that some of the transactions of Co-operative stores are with non-members, which means that the average amount spent at Co-operative stores by the families of Co-operators is not so large as the above figure would indicate.

A correspondent draws attention to the passage, "Co-operation bears no relation to Socialism," which appeared in the article, and asks if it is correct. It should be obvious that the writer was not referring to co-operation in general but to the Co-operative Movement. It is the latter, not the former, which "bears no relation to Socialism."

ED. COMM.

#### Wages in Germany.

It is interesting to know how our fellow workers in other lands are faring. From the *Daily Telegraph* (9/9/32) we learn that in Germany about 2,500,000 insured persons, or 20 per cent. of the total, earn up to 36s. weekly. About 7,000,000, or over 60 per cent. of the total, earn 24s. a week or less, and of these, 2,500,000 earn less than 12s. weekly, their wages being less than the unemployment benefit. It is now proposed to reduce even these miserably small wages on condition that the employers increase their staff. How to dispose of the extra commodities thereby produced is not explained. One day it will occur to the workers that they might just as well be distributed to themselves. When they realise this, they will be on the road to Socialism.

RAMO.



## Notes by the Way.

### Maxton and Marx.

Mr. Maxton's utterances never show more than a superficial acquaintance with Marx's writings, just sufficient to impress the average uncritical I.L.P. audience. Nevertheless, he claims on occasion that he is a Marxist, and the I.L.P. as a body is now, according to its General Secretary, on a "definitely Marxist" basis. Mr. Maxton, writing about the late John MacLean (*New Leader*, September 2nd), says that it was MacLean who gave him his "earliest insight into the work of Marx." Maxton goes out of his way to praise MacLean for integrity and courage in refusing to "minimise or explain away what he had said," on the many occasions when his activities landed him in the dock.

This is more than can be said for Maxton in his advocacy of the Marxism which he is supposed to accept. He recently reviewed Trotsky's "History of the Russian Revolution" in the *News-Chronicle* (June 27th, 1932). Here was a rare and valuable opportunity for Mr. Maxton to declare himself boldly. But the *News-Chronicle* is the organ of Nonconformist-radicals, and Nonconformist-radicals have votes, and they strongly dislike Marxism with its materialist philosophy. So the would-be British Lenin carefully balanced himself on the fence, managing at the same time to deliver a nice back-hander in the shape of the common jibe of the capitalist apologist that Marxists are "doctrinaires." He gave a brief statement of the Marxist case, but prefaced it with the words "the doctrinaire Marxist . . . tends to describe in hard, formal language the economic conditions, and the nature of the class struggle which is in process." Then, instead of saying "This is the Marxian case. I accept it," Mr. Maxton would not commit himself to anything more definite than "The Marxist says, and probably says truly, . . ."

There is a good word for this sort of thing—"mealy-mouthed."

Mr. Maxton used to be a teacher. We can imagine how he taught. "Now, boys and girls, the doctrinaire mathematicians say that two and two make four. They are probably right. . ."

The school authorities must have been glad to get rid of him.

### How Dare They!

The *Daily Mail* is shocked. Some workers in New South Wales have "seriously" asked to be allowed to have some of the comforts of life over and above a bare subsistence. This occurred at the N.S.W. Industrial Commission. The *Mail* reports as follows:—

The trade unions . . . admitted that the cost of living had fallen but tried to introduce a higher wage

standard, seriously demanding allowances for tobacco, 7 pints of beer weekly, two cinemas weekly, 12 suit pressings yearly, hair shingling and cigarettes for wives. They also claimed that the children of workers should not of necessity have to wear patched trousers. . . .

(*Daily Mail*, 27th August.)

Who ever heard of such a thing? Not necessary for workers' children to wear patched clothes! What would there be to keep their mothers out of mischief in their idle hours? Off they would go for their weekly allowance of cigarettes and hair-shingling, and heaven knows what else.

This was not far short of treason and the Industrial Commission smartly nipped it in the bud, reducing the basic wage from 82s. 6d. to 70s. for men and from 44s. 6d. to 38s. for women.

### The Leopard Has Not Changed its Spots.

Labour Party supporters who believe that the Labour Party has become a different party since it lost Snowden and MacDonald should ask themselves why, at the Twickenham by-election in September, the *Daily Herald* (September 15th) thought fit to give prominence on its front page to a declaration by the Hon. Treasurer of the Twickenham Liberal Party urging voters to vote for Mr. Holman, the Labour candidate. In the absence of a Liberal candidate this Liberal Party official found the Labour candidate deserving of Liberal support. If the Labour candidate stood for Socialism, as his party pretends, he would have received just as much opposition from the Liberals as from the Tories. Instead of which the Liberal press told their readers to vote Labour.

### It is Just the Same at Home.

A special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* has made a tour of inspection of the great industrial works being built in Russia. He is favourably impressed by what has already been achieved in the way of improving the productive capacity of Russian industry and is optimistic regarding future progress. But this is what he has to say about the living conditions of the workers at Magnitogorsk, a new industrial town where an enormous steel plant is under construction:—

Perhaps the most serious and certainly the most obvious defect at Magnitogorsk is the complete absence of decent housing. The barracks where most of the workers live are over-crowded and sometimes infested with vermin; the canalisation and water supply are most unsatisfactory. The ungainly brick structure which represents an hotel for engineers was so over-crowded at the time of my visit that people were using the bathrooms as living quarters. The administration of the factory readily admits the unsatisfactory state of the housing, but explains it by the necessity for concentrating all available labour and material on industrial construction. That this explanation is not regarded as altogether satisfactory is evident from a recent tart governmental characterisation of the situation, which begins: "The con-

dition of work on the building of the city of Magnitogorsk is in an extremely unsatisfactory state, which threatens to upset the productive activity of the Magnitogorsk works. The plan of housing construction for 1932 has been fulfilled only by 10 per cent."

When the correspondent discovered the bad housing and the irregular food supply, etc., alongside marvellously-equipped factories and up-to-date plant and machinery, he must have felt how closely Magnitogorsk resembles any other industrial area in any other capitalist country. But then what is the use of sending correspondents abroad unless they can discover or pretend to discover some new thing?

### Asquith and the Life of the Worker.

What the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent forgot to say about the life of the workers in England was said by the late Lord Oxford (then Mr. Asquith) in a letter written in the early nineties, and published in *The Times* (September 14th, 1932):—

We all think, at least I do, a vast deal too much about ourselves and our own feelings and hopes. When I was at Oldham to-day I was standing at half-past 12 outside Platt's works. They are the largest machine makers in the world, and employ 10,000 "hands." The whistle sounded for the dinner hour, and suddenly the great gates were opened and there burst out an ocean of men, in such numbers that for five minutes the streets in both directions were blocked by the moving crowd. I watched them closely as they passed me—a long procession of wan-faced, grimy, tired, silent figures. They get an average of 18s. a week, and work with intervals for meals from 6 to 6. Civilisation and religion have done something for them—given them paved streets, watertight houses, Board schools, chapels, and even (in Oldham) an art gallery. But life in its real sense they have never known, and to their dying day will never know.

Twenty years afterwards Mr. Asquith did not think that there was anything incongruous or indecent in his asking these same men to sacrifice their lives defending against the Germans the interests of the class Asquith represented, the class responsible for these conditions.

### Capitalism's Crises.

Writing in the *New Leader* (September 16th), Mr. Maxton ridicules the possibility that capitalism may recover from the depression. Against a recent forecast of trade revival he places a number of statements from capitalist sources and says, "I could go on citing from Tory newspapers evidences in support of my belief that the industrial crisis is deepening."

Mr. Maxton may be right about the trend of the depression at the moment (but even on that point he can be right only because he was completely wrong a year ago in announcing that the final collapse of capitalism would have occurred before February, 1932), but in general his argument is hopelessly confused and misinformed. He says:—

Every year since 1921 one or other or several of

our leading public men has announced to the world that the depression of trade is over, that the boom is in sight.

Mr. Maxton is unaware of the fact, but nevertheless, capitalism, both in Great Britain and in the world generally, was going through a period of expansion up to the start of the present crisis in 1929. In Great Britain the number of unemployed in 1928 and 1929 was nearly a million fewer than in 1921. The volume of production increased between 1921 and 1929 more or less continuously. According to the review of world production (1925-31), just issued by the Economic Section of the League of Nations, the world output of primary products rose 11 per cent., of industrial products possibly 30 per cent., and general trade 20 per cent. (*Manchester Guardian*, September 16th).

At different times Mr. Maxton has held many beliefs, most of them wrong ones. Workers who swallow his present absurd belief about the impending collapse of capitalism will have cause to regret it just as they had cause to regret swallowing Mr. Maxton's earlier beliefs—abandoned for the time being—that the workers' only hope was to vote for the Labour candidates, that they should put their trust in Snowden and MacDonald, that bankers alone, and not the capitalists as a whole, are exploiters, and that capitalist reforms are the way to solve working class problems.

### Socialist Propaganda in Russia.

The refusal of the Russian Government to allow Trotsky's supporters to propagate his views is a reminder of the obstacles Socialist propaganda will have to overcome in that country even when the Russian workers begin to wake up to the fact that Bolshevik-administered capitalism cannot solve their problems. One of Trotsky's adherents in Moscow writes as follows to the *New York Militant* (July 30th, 1932):—

Despite the unremitting organisational raids, the Left Opposition lives. Oppositionist units and groups are disseminated everywhere, and in many places considerable Oppositionist nests are uncovered. There was hardly ever in this world at any time or anywhere such difficulty for a genuine Marxist trend to carry on its work, in the technical sense, as there is for us at present in the Soviet Union. This is one of those vicious jokes of history, on which the most expert dialectician can break his teeth. The more respectable part of the capitulators motivates its capitulation precisely in this manner. "It is anyway impossible to carry on illegal activities; at any rate, it is better to serve as an honest functionary of the workers' state." But it appears that the Oppositionist idea finds its channels. As regards this sphere, I, of course, am compelled to be exceedingly careful. I shall enumerate therefore only such facts as have already received a certain publicity, or to put it more exactly, which have reached the ears of the rulers.

Imitating their Moscow masters, the British *Daily Worker* (August 31st) states that it will not insert letters defending Trotsky's point of view.



### Where the Communists Get Their Money.

Money is not so plentiful in the Communist Party as it used to be, but even so the officially-returned expenses of the Communist candidates at the last election totalled over £2,500, not counting their 20 forfeited deposits, which total another £3,000. (See "Election Expenses," H.M. Stationery Office, 1932. 1s. 3d.)

Of course, anyone who knows the difficulties which face small organisations with a working-class membership knows that the Communist Party, with its daily paper and lavish expenditure on publications, must be subsidised. Officially the Communist Party has never denied this—why should it?—but the ordinary members, for reasons of tactics or because they know no better, frequently maintain the contrary. There is, however, no doubt whatever that money has been and no doubt still is being received from Russia.

In 1919 Zinoviev in his Presidential Report for the Executive Committee of the Communist International dealt with the question of monetary support for parties abroad and said that the

Russian workers . . . deemed it their proletarian duty to render . . . support to the struggling proletariat of other countries. . . . The Italian Communists, for instance, proudly declared quite openly that some of their party organisations could not have been formed except for the brotherly help of the Communist International. Similar declarations have been made by the Communist workers in other countries.

("Editions of the Communist International," printed in Christiana, 1920. Report by Zinoviev, p. 17.)

He said that it had been decided that the Russian Communist Party should "take upon itself the chief burden of expense of the work of the Executive Committee."

Mr. Walton Newbold admitted, in a letter to *Forward* (July 10th, 1926) that his expenses when running as a Communist candidate for Parliament "were defrayed in the main from the funds of the Communist International, and originated in Moscow."

The Communist official organ, *Workers' Life*, on May 11th, 1928, issued a "Frank Statement" on "The Communist Party's Money." The statement contains the passage:—

The Communist Party has never sought to disguise the fact that it is a national section of an international party, paying its financial contribution to its international headquarters and receiving assistance in return from time to time for different phases of its national work.

This "frank" statement is, of course, decidedly the reverse of frank in contriving to disguise the fact that the money received from Russia is far in excess of the contributions to Russia. The Home Office claimed that the British Communist Party spent £27,928 in the year ended April, 1928, of which £10,330 was derived from payments of £5 Bank of England notes made by a bank in Moscow. (See *Daily Telegraph*, June 27th, 1930.)

There has never been any real reason why any Communists should deny something which everybody knows and to which the only objection is that it ties the Communist Party to the unsound policy of their paymasters.

### The Quality of Communist Party Membership.

The *Communist Review* (August) publishes figures of Communist membership in Great Britain since 1922. The figure given for that year is 5,116 and for January, 1932, 9,000. Comment is made on the unsatisfactory quality of the membership and on the rapidity with which recruits pass in and pass out again. The writer says that some 1,500 of the 2,700 members who joined between November, 1931, and January, 1932, had left the Party within about six months. This would make the present estimated membership about 7,500. When it is remembered how the Communist organisers rope in hundreds of members at a time, this instability is not surprising. During the cotton dispute Mr. Saklatvala was in Lancashire on behalf of the Communist Party. He sent a message from Preston to Communist Headquarters claiming that he had enrolled more than 100 strikers in one day as members of the Party. (See *Manchester Guardian*, September 9th, 1932.)

The writer in the *Communist Review* says most of the recruits at the end of 1931 "came from the ranks of the unemployed, signed application forms at mass recruiting meetings in moments of enthusiasm; many of them having no real intention of becoming members."

### Capitalists and Capitalists.

Mr. Bromley, President of the Trades Union Congress, is one of those Labour leaders who encourage the false view that the workers should line up with one section of the capitalist class (the industrialists) against another (the bankers). At the Trades Union Congress on September 5th he developed this line and described the National Government as being controlled by "banking and financial interests." If we turn to the Labour Party's analysis of the composition of the House of Commons (see *Labour Bulletin*, March, 1932) we find how little warrant there is for Mr. Bromley's assertion. Out of 691 directorships of companies held by Members of Parliament, only 11 are bank directorships, and 53 are described as "finance and land." Among the non-financial directorships there are 29 brewery, 26 chemical, 30 coal, iron and steel, 40 electric light and power, 36 engineering, 51 insurance, 36 mining, 24 paper, printing, etc., 25 railway, 26 textile and 20 telegraph directorships.

Are we to understand from Mr. Bromley that only the banking and financial M.P.s vote for capitalism and against the workers, and that the

remainder have backed the workers against the Government and capitalism? We have not noticed this, but we do notice that the railway directors are asking for another cut in the pay of the railwaymen, including those who are members of the Union of which Mr. Bromley is General Secretary.

### The Country that is Safe for the Bondholders.

The *Moscow Daily News*, published in English, and distributed by official Russian agencies, gave prominence in a recent issue (August 15th) to some flattering remarks about Russia made by Mr. Corliss Lamont, son of Thomas W. Lamont, of J. P. Morgan & Co., the American financiers. The headline running right across the top of the front page says, "Soviet Bonds Safest says Lamont."

The sub-headings are "Recommends them to U.S.A. investors. Big Return, Par Redemption, Defaults Unknown."

Mr. Lamont, in an interview, said:—

It is true that the Soviet Union offers great opportunities to American business men. . . . I am even more impressed, however, by the opportunities here for the average American investor. How many people in the United States know that they can invest in the Soviet Government bonds which regularly bring a return of 10 per cent. in good American dollars; and which can be redeemed at par on demand? Backed up, as they are, by the resources of the whole Soviet Union, it would seem that there are no safer bonds in the world to-day, and few as safe.

How happy the American investors will be to discover that they can get a safe return of 10 per cent. in good American dollars, and how lucky the Russian workers are to have this opportunity of consoling the bondholders after their recent unfortunate speculations with Mr. Kreuger, and the Insull companies.

Perhaps the visit of Mr. Lamont to Moscow and the recent suggestions of Russian approaches to New York financiers will explain the sudden cancellation of a Negro film which the Russians had planned. *The Crisis* (September), a Negro-American monthly, states that 22 young American negroes went to Russia at their own expense, but by invitation, to take part in a Communist propaganda film. Suddenly they were informed, late in August, that the contract was "off." The *Observer* (London, September 11th) publishes a report from the Moscow correspondent to the effect that some of the negroes concerned have stated that the film was cancelled because representations were made by "an influential American who is interested in promoting closer relations between the United States and the Soviet Union." The negroes are annoyed and denounce the Soviet Government for "making a compromise with white American imperialism at the expense of the oppressed negro proletariat."

### Censorship in Russia and Elsewhere.

Dr. Edwin Bevan writes to the *Times* (September 3rd) complaining because the Russian authorities held up a book of his dealing with the History of Christianity. It was returned with the note that its entry into Russia is forbidden.

Dr. Bevan is probably not aware that within the past two or three years, and possibly now also, the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, as well as the publications of the Communist Party, are forbidden entry into Australia. Now that we have drawn his attention to it, we wonder if he will write to the *Times* about it.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7), where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Readers in Canada are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Canada at 204, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, wherethe *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is obtainable.

Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS.

		LONDON DISTRICT.
Sunday	...	Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m.
	...	Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m.
	...	Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
	...	Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
	...	Finsbury Park, 4 p.m.
Monday	...	Clapham Common, 3.30 p.m.
	...	Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.
	...	Prince of Wales, Paddington, 7.30 p.m.
	...	Leyton, Whipp's Cross Corner, 7.30 p.m.
	...	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
Wednesday	...	The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m.
	...	Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
	...	Stepney Green, E.8., 8 p.m.
	...	Kenninghall road, Clapton, E.8., 8 p.m.
	...	Cooks Road, Kennington Park Road (by Kennington Theatre), 8 p.m.
Thursday	...	Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m.
	...	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
	...	Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball," Cambridge Road, E.8., 8 p.m.
	...	Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
	...	Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2, Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.
- BIRKENHEAD.**—Secretary, Edmund Howarth, 60, Park Road South, Birkenhead, Cheshire. Branch meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m. Open-air meetings held every Sunday, 8 p.m. at the Main Entrance, Birkenhead Park.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington, Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex-Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.
- EAST LONDON.**—Communications to W. Thompson, 34, Queen Anne Road, E.9. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room) Commercial Road, E.
- ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 60, Fisher Street, Dennistoun, Glasgow, E.1. Sec. W. Falconer, 128, Bluevale Street, E.1.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A, Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., A. Cutts, 25, Allamouth Road, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Witherby Road.
- ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., D. White, 26, Dryden Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.
- NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Discussions after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W. 10. Sec., A. Bentley, 31, Claremont Road, W.9.
- SHEFFIELD.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7.30 p.m., Room 5, Trades Hall, Charles Street. Public discussion after business. Sec., J. Rodgers, 136, Rockingham Lane.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33, Ernest Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.
- TOOTING.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garra Lane, Tooting, opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., J. Keable, 60, Laitwood Road, S.W.12.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

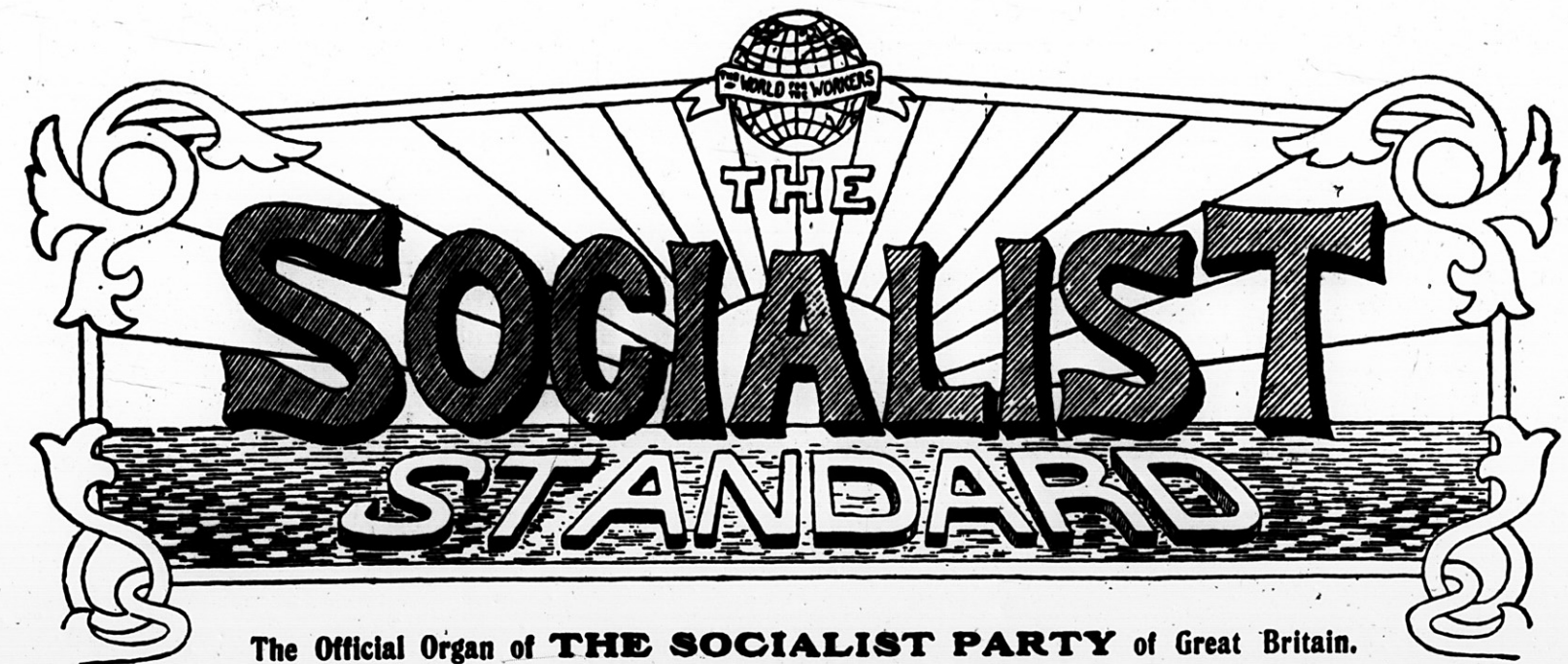
THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.





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#### CONTENTS.

THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE	33	SNOWDEN'S GOODBYE	41
A PAMPHLET WHICH MISSES ITS MARK	35	THE DISPUTE IN THE TEXTILE TRADES	42
NOTICES OF MEETINGS AND LECTURES	37	LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	43
A WORD TO THE UNEMPLOYED	38	SCRAPS FROM THE PRESS	44
CAPITAL	39	YORK AND OTTAWA	45
THE STEAM AND THE SAFETY VALVE: Limits of Unemployed Demonstrations	40	NOTES BY THE WAY	46
		BRANCH DIRECTORY	48

## THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

The new programme of the Labour Party, put into shape at their Annual Conference at Leicester, 3rd to 7th October, makes no sensational departure from the old programme, "Labour and the Nation." The policy embodied in "Labour and the Nation" contained measures for limiting hours; minimum wages; public control of the Bank of England; nationalisation of the coal, transport and power industries; "public ownership" of agricultural land; stabilisation of prices by control of imports; Free Trade; more steeply progressive taxation, etc.; while the new policy contains measures for steeper income tax; Free Trade; control of imports to fix prices; nationalisation of the land; public control of the coal, power, and transport industries, and of the banking system; minimum wages; a shorter working day, and so on. The main plank in the old programme was nationalisation; in the new one, public utilities. Like the old, the new programme professes "to lay the foundations of a new social order," but actually does nothing but propound schemes for renovating the existing one.

The capitalist aims of the Labour Party are well illustrated by the debate on financial policy. Mr. Hugh Dalton's preamble to the resolution for State control of the Bank of England attributed responsibility for trade depression to wrong banking policy,

the aim of which should be, he claimed, to stabilise wholesale prices and foreign exchange, and "safeguard the workers against such exploitation as has been inflicted on them in recent years by speculators." The resolution stated:—

The Bank of England should be brought under public ownership and control. Its governor should be appointed by the Government, and be subject to the general direction of a Cabinet Minister, who should be responsible to the House of Commons for banking and credit policy. The day-to-day business of the Bank should be carried on by the governor and his staff. *Daily Herald*, 5/10/32.

In putting forward an amendment to include the joint stock banks, Mr. E. F. Wise pointed out that "there was nothing very Socialistic about making it a national bank. Other countries, even the capitalist United States, had the Central Bank nationally controlled. Liberals three or four years ago proposed making the Bank of England a public institution. In many respects it was already a public institution." "If their object was Socialist finance," added Mr. F. Hughes, "and not just to control and limit the operations of capitalist finance, then the nationalisation of the joint stock banks was as essential as the nationalisation of the Bank of England." (*Daily Herald*, 5/10/32.) Both the resolution and the amendment, which were carried, ignore the fact that it is capitalism, not speculation, which inflicts



exploitation on the workers; and that finance is but the machinery of capitalism. To speak of "Socialist finance," therefore, is simply silly. Ironically enough, Mr. E. Bevin opposed the amendment to include joint stock banks on the ground that "I, as a Socialist, am not content to be always advocating the taking over of things that will not be necessary in a Socialist State. Give me the Bank of England," and "I visualise a Socialist finance that will leave the joint stock banks as at present organised." (*Daily Herald*, 5/10/32.)

The resolution on national control of transport services was likewise prefaced by references to "Socialism," although it aims to outdo the existing capitalist owners at the work of intensifying exploitation. The *Daily Herald* of the 6th October, under the heading, "Labour shows how to make transport pay," describes it as "a plan to put the transport system of the country on a paying basis." Mr. H. Morrison's resolution proposed to co-ordinate transport services on a national scale by setting up a "National Transport Board appointed by the Minister of Transport on appropriate grounds of ability"—a corporation, that is, like the Port of London Authority or the B.B.C. "As to the form of the purchase transaction," says the Labour Party Policy Report, No. 2 (p. 17), "it would probably be convenient to give the owners stock of appropriate categories and amount in the new national undertaking," which would "give the holders the right to receive the interest payable, and to repayment of the stock. . . ." The proposal is based on the same principle as appeared in the London Passenger Transport Bill brought forward by Mr. H. Morrison when Minister of Transport, and supported by Lord Ashfield, Chairman of the London Traffic Combine. The *Daily Herald*, 6th October, says:—

Not alone Labour and Trade Union spokesmen, but many influential public men, entirely opposed to the general run of Socialist measures, have openly supported the transfer of transport to public enterprise. Immediately after the Great War, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill both desired to take this decisive step.

Speaking against the amendment to include transport workers' representatives on the Transport Board, Mr. A. G. Walkden "did not share the tremendous anxiety as to the workers getting a look in." (*Daily Herald*, 6/10/32.)

Similar proposals were carried for the unification of the coal industry under a Central Authority; for the "national ownership and control of Electricity Generation and Distribution" through "a National Electricity Board appointed by the Minister of Transport on appropriate grounds of ability"; and for "national ownership of the land" through a National Agricultural Commission responsible to the Minister of Agriculture (Policy Reports 3 and 4, p. 1). The existing shareholders or landowners are to receive appropriate

holdings of stock. The swing-over from nationalisation to public utilities (or what Mr. H. Morrison has called the "Capitalist Soviet") no doubt aims to obviate the charge of bureaucratic inefficiency levelled against nationalised industries, and to make the process of State co-ordination more palatable to those capitalists less enamoured of the fashionable cult of the "Plan," those whose "opposition to being nationalised," in the words of the Liberal economist, Professor Clay (*The Listener*, 20/1/32), "is an instance of the short-sightedness of the capitalists where their own interests are concerned." "What difference would it have made," he says, "if the railways had been nationalised in 1919? I cannot myself see that it would have made much difference to the railway workers or railway users; it might have made a considerable difference to the owners of railway capital, since the Government stock they would have got in 1919 in exchange for their railway securities would not have depreciated as those have done."

These capitalist arrangements do not alter any essential feature of the relations between capitalist and worker. They solve no working class problem. Capitalism is not abolished by changing shares into stock, nor wage-slavery ended by changing masters. The workers still remain without access to the means of wealth, except at the bidding of the capitalist class, who individually or collectively own them. "Public ownership" may even retard the development of class-consciousness among the workers. Just as the payment for labour-power in money wages helps to conceal the daily tribute of unpaid toil wrung from the workers by the master class, so employment by the "public corporation" tends to disguise the antagonism between worker and capitalist. Thus is made easier the unresisting exploitation of the workers by the simple device of making them "public servants."

The new Labour Party agricultural policy lands them in the dilemma of having to advocate tariffs ("control of imports," the *Daily Herald* of 7th October calls them) to maintain food prices, while in the same breath they urge Free Trade to keep down the cost of living. Nor are the Labour Party's proposals to limit indirect taxation, or to wipe out war debts and reparations, of any concern to the workers who, being a propertyless class, do not carry the burden either of war debts or taxes. The question of limiting armaments is again one which concerns the master class, because they have to pay for them and cannot do without them. However, Mr. J. R. Clynes (in moving a resolution on disarmament and peace) may denounce those who pour "scorn on the League of Nations, and thereby endanger the peace of the world" (*Daily Herald*, 6/10/32), the fact remains that to recommend disarmament in a society whose mainspring

is the scramble for profit squeezed from the workers, and in which war and the suppression of working class revolt are constant features, is about as sensible as advising a drowning man to keep dry. The Conference was treated to the same sort of pious humbug by Mr. G. Lansbury, about the "youth of the nation being driven into the pit of despair," how "the world has come to the end of capitalism," and how he and his colleagues in the House of Commons fought against that "beastly infliction," the Means Test.

The Conference leaders who attacked the economies and cuts made by the National Government overlooked the part played by Labour leaders in the formation of that Government, and made no mention of Mr. A. Henderson's willingness to acquiesce in the dole cut when he was a member of the Labour Cabinet.

It is no surprise that a resolution instructing the leaders of the next Labour Government to "introduce at once great Socialist measures or some general plan to nationalise the key industries," should be opposed by Mr. Henderson on the ground that "the Conference would be tying its hands" (*Daily Herald*, 6/10/32), and solemnly warning them, "If you pass this, you will regret it" (*News Chronicle*, 6/10/32).

These misleaders of the workers pay lip service in plenty to the need for "drastic Socialism," for a "complete Socialist policy," for substituting "a new social order for the present system"; but the emptiness of their revolutionary talk is shown by the footling nature of their concrete proposals. "Abolition of capitalism," they cry, "and the establishment of a fixed Easter!"

Resolutions to the Conference from various local Branches throughout the country urging closer control by the Party over M.P.s and Cabinet Ministers, evoked by the disillusionment in MacDonald's leadership, show that the working class is yet far from realising the futility of leadership, that leaders can exist only while the workers are willing to be led. The problem of control over leaders disappears when the working class learns to do without them: the problem has no existence for a body of class-conscious workers democratically organised for one clearly defined object, the establishment of Socialism.

F. EVANS.

## READ THIS

### The Socialist Party of Great Britain

AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

Deals with the founding of the Socialist Party, the Liberal, Tory, Labour and Communist parties and the I.L.P., the Russian Dictatorship, War, Trade Unions, Social Reforms, etc.

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### A Pamphlet which Misses its Mark

Of the very large number of pamphlets claiming to be Socialist propaganda that are published month by month, only a small number are of even passing value. In the main they deal with capitalism's problems from the standpoint of the reformer without any real grasp of Socialist principles. Occasionally something better is attempted. Among the latter is "From Slavery to Freedom," published by the Socialist Propaganda League. It purports to be a Socialist survey of history from the earliest times, the object being to relate the Socialist future to the past development of mankind. It fails in its essential purpose for several reasons. The first is that the treatment of social development in the pamphlet is too sketchy and disjointed, due probably to the writer or writers having tackled the job without first deciding exactly what lessons were to be drawn. The value of a knowledge of history to the workers (even a much simplified and elementary knowledge) is a severely practical one. It is necessary that the workers should realise that the social system has changed in the past, that it has changed because of material forces which are still operating, that these forces work in a manner which can be expressed in laws of social development. Learning these lessons of history the worker can discover from the past how to organise for the capture of political power as a prelude to the establishment of Socialism. But to make this clear in the space of a small pamphlet is a very difficult task. The chief difficulty is to select just enough of the main features to illustrate the course of social development without making the description read like a bewildering catalogue of unrelated facts. The worker who approaches this pamphlet without previous acquaintance with the subject is likely to find it very hard to bring away the few outstanding ideas which it should have been the aim to provide.

The writer of the pamphlet has not the same excuse for certain careless and ambiguous passages in the historical section. For example, the treatment of the State is unsatisfactory and likely to mislead. Having said (p. 9) that the early Gens, Phratry, Tribe and Confederation each had its own "political organisation," the pamphlet fails to explain the fundamental difference between that form of organisation and the later coercive political organisation—the State. On page 13 the capitalists are described as capturing "the political institutions," from the nobility, while on page 16 reference is made to the same capitalists depending upon "the centralised official and military State." This would make it look as if the administrative organisation of the Tribes and Gens, etc., was like the political institutions controlled by the nobility, i.e., a "centralised official and military State."



It is also very misleading to suggest, as is done on page 9, that cannibalism was an "occasional alternative" to slavery.

On page 10 is the grossly misleading assertion that under chattel slavery "wealth was overwhelmingly produced for use and not for profit."

The inference to be drawn from the first three paragraphs on page 11 is that Feudalism originated through drought and famine in Asia and was not the offspring of conditions within the Roman Empire.

There is a slip on page 21, where it is said to be paradoxical that an employer should introduce a machine costing less than the wages of the displaced workers. "Less" should obviously be "more."

On page 24, line 29, "creditors" should read "debtors."

On page 16 we are told "The lands of the Monasteries and the Gilds had already been filched by the absolute monarchy," and on the next page, "on their accession to power the merchants and manufacturing class proceeded to dispossess the Church of its lands and territories." The suppression of the Monasteries occurred in the 16th century, before the "merchant and manufacturing class" came into possession of political power, although the movement was born of their needs.

Leaving the historical treatment and turning to the attempted exposition of Socialist principles, we find many serious defects, a few of which are briefly noted.

On page 2 we are told that the "threat of tariffs" will "still further depreciate their [workers] exiguous standard of comfort." No further explanation is given of this statement, and the leader is left with the impression that tariffs are a cause of a lowered standard of living, and presumably, therefore, are something the worker should resist, although on page 26 free trade is called a "capitalist nostrum."

On page 2 also we have the familiar I.L.P.-Communist nonsense about the catastrophic collapse of capitalism in the assertion that the development of capitalism will lead "ultimately" to a condition where "production has been brought to a standstill." A knowledge of the working of capitalism during crises would have prevented the writer from supporting this fallacy.

Again, on page 2, there is reference to the workers responding to the call for war with "a flat refusal." This is just sentimental claptrap. A capitalist class placed in power by a non-Socialist electorate is not going to be greatly disturbed by attempts to organise a flat refusal. The curious part is that the next page contains the assertion "we cannot give support to any movements which have for their object the removal of some particular

evil arising from the system itself." Surely war is an evil arising from the system itself?

The treatment of trade unions is muddled, apparently being the work of two persons with opposing views. One of them, on page 26, describes the evils of bureaucratic control of trade unions and asks rhetorically if the workers are not as competent as their officials "to control and manage their own organisation, not to please capital, but themselves?" This implies that trade unions can be made useful to the workers, and it is evidently the same writer who says on page 27 that the workers should "set about the task of building up more effective industrial organisations having for their motto the abolition, not the amelioration, of the wages system." But the other writer will not have this. He says (p. 26) that "even the most perfect control over officials, and the most willing and efficient service from them could not make of trade unions an effective instrument for improving the conditions of the workers, or even retaining their hard-won present standards." It is pertinent to ask how these "hard-won" standards were "won," if not by trade union organisation and action. And if the workers ought to leave the present unions (as they are told on page 27) and build up "more effective industrial organisations," having as their aim "the abolition, not the amelioration, of the wages system," what would be the use of this if, as we are told on the next line, "industrial action can only be applied against effects of capitalism, and cannot dislodge the cause of the workers' slavery and poverty"?

In short, the pamphlet rejects the case made out by Marx for trade union action (see Value, Price and Profit for example), without making any serious attempt to answer his arguments.

On page 19 an explanation of the class-struggle tells the reader that the class-struggle ensues from the conflict between employers and workers over the conditions of employment, instead of out of the private ownership of the means of life. This is unsound in theory and in practise has led to many unsound actions by those who have fallen into this error.

Lastly, the pamphlet makes some malicious assertions about the S.P.G.B., for example, that it is controlled by a "caucus" although "in form, the control . . . is democratic." Anyone who cares to look at our rules and to see our E.C. and other organs at work (all of them are open to the public) will see the silliness of this assertion, for which no kind of evidence is given, except the vague implication that "all forward movements initiated outside of their own circle" are blocked. By "forward movements" the writer doubtless means such policies as the anti-Marxian and anti-working-class attitude on trade unions expressed in the pamphlet. It does not seem to have dawned on the writer of the pamphlet that such retrograde ideas make no

headway in the S.P.G.B., because the members have joined it on a basis which excludes them and, therefore, do not want any such innovation.

Without saying so explicitly the pamphlet manages to imply that members of the S.P.G.B. are allowed to belong to the Anglican or Catholic Churches. This is utterly devoid of truth.

Reference is made to the S.P.G.B.'s attitude that a Socialist, elected to Parliament by a Socialist electorate on the Socialist platform, might be instructed by the Party to vote for certain measures that might come before Parliament, on their merits. The only argument given in the pamphlet against this sound Marxian attitude is that such votes might in certain circumstances save a capitalist Government from defeat. The attitude put in the pamphlet is that "a Socialist electorate would understand the need for opposition on each and every occasion to each and every capitalist Party." This overlooks the point that a vote against a measure introduced by a capitalist opposition party in the House might have precisely the same effect as a vote for a measure introduced by the Government, i.e., it "might save a capitalist Government from defeat."

Incidentally, we wonder if the writer holds that a Socialist in the House of Commons ought to vote against, say, a proposal by a capitalist party to stop a war, on the ground that the proposal emanated from a capitalist party.

Our policy of fighting elections for propaganda purposes is attacked by the pamphlet, by means of the dishonest device of implying (without saying so definitely) that our candidates run on a non-Socialist programme. The writer of the pamphlet knows this to be completely untrue.

The Socialist Propaganda League should stop and consider whether its claim to be an organisation for educating the workers and clearing away confusion does not place it under the obligation of making only those statements in support of its case for which evidence can be given. Malevolent, unprovable and lying insinuations, levelled on the principle that some part of a wad of mud is sure to stick, do not help the working class movement, and it is doubtful whether in the long run they even help those who fling them.

G. H. D.

#### Notices of Meetings and Lectures—continued.

##### BETHNAL GREEN.

S.P.G.B. versus I.L.P.

A Debate will be held on Friday, December 2nd, at 8 p.m. at BETHNAL GREEN TOWN HALL.

Subject . . . "Which Party should the Workers support?"

Speakers . . . S.P.G.B., E. Hardy. I.L.P., N. Dunbar.  
Admission free. All invited. Doors open 7.30 p.m.

#### NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

##### HEAD OFFICE.

Meetings will be held at 42, GREAT DOVER STREET, on Sunday evenings at 8 p.m.

November 6th. . . . . "Dictatorship of the Proletariat."  
Subject . . . . . S. Rubin  
Speaker . . . . .  
November 13th. . . . . "The End of the Working Class."  
Subject . . . . . E. Wilmott.  
Speaker . . . . .  
November 20th. . . . . "Political versus Direct Action."  
Subject . . . . . A. Jacobs.  
Speaker . . . . .  
November 27th. . . . . "The Decline of Capitalism."  
Subject . . . . . "Toni".  
Speaker . . . . .  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion.

##### STRATFORD.

S.P.G.B. versus TORY PARTY.

A Debate will be held on Sunday, November 27th, at 8 p.m., at STRATFORD TOWN HALL.

Subject: . . . . . "Which Party should the Workers Support, the Tory Party or the S.P.G.B.?"  
Speakers: (Tory Party) . . . . . Mrs. E. Tennant.  
(S.P.G.B.) . . . . . E. Hardy.  
Admission free. All invited.

##### CITY OF LONDON HOTEL.

A Meeting, under the auspices of the Metropolitan Secular Society, will be held on Sunday November 20th, at 8 p.m., at CITY OF LONDON HOTEL, 107, York Road, N. (five minutes' from Brecknock Arms, Camden Road).

Subject . . . . . "Socialism and Religion."  
Speaker . . . . . A. Kohn (S.P.G.B.).  
Admission free. All invited.

##### BATTERSEA.

A Meeting will be held at LATCHMERE BATHS (Waiting Room, entrance in Burns Road), on Thursday, November 17th, at 8.30 p.m.

Subject . . . . . "The Case for Socialism."  
Speaker . . . . . "Sandy".  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

##### NOTTINGHAM.

A Lecture on "Socialism and Political Action" will be given by A. Kohn on Sunday, November 6th, at 2.30 p.m., at the LECTURE THEATRE, University College, Shakespeare Street, under the auspices of the Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society.  
Admission free. Questions and discussion. Open to all.

##### LEYTON.

Meetings will be held on Sunday, November 6th, and Sunday, November 20th, at 7.30 p.m., at GROVE HOUSE, High Road, Leyton.

November 6th. . . . . "Can a Christian be a Socialist?"  
Subject . . . . . Gilmac.  
Speaker . . . . .  
November 20th. . . . . "The Case for Capitalism"  
Subject . . . . . E. WILMOTT  
Speaker . . . . .  
Admission free. Questions and discussion. All invited.  
Doors open 7 p.m.

##### POPLAR TOWN HALL.

Meetings will be held at POPLAR TOWN HALL on Sunday, November 6th, and Sunday, December 4th, at 8 p.m.

November 6th. . . . . "Emancipation through Parliament."  
Subject . . . . . A. Jacobs.  
Speaker . . . . .  
December 4th. . . . . "Pseudo-Revolutionists."  
Subject . . . . . E. LAKE  
Speaker . . . . .  
All invited. Questions and discussion. Admission free.



## A Word to the Unemployed

The economic forces at work under capitalism tend towards a growing army of unemployed, and the problem is permanent as long as the private ownership of the means of production continues. The increasing use and complexity of machinery, and the economies in organisation, are factors that enable production to meet the needs of consumption by the work of ever fewer and fewer workers. There used to be a possibility of temporarily easing the situation by the opening up of new markets. Now that the whole world has been drawn into the net of capitalist production the prospect of "new markets" in foreign countries is disappearing.

Each national group is speeding up and rationalising production to the utmost of its power, and in the process meeting its own basic demands and looking for a market for its surplus. Cutting across this is the operation of the gigantic international trusts which seek to rationalise production and distribution internationally.

In the past, European and American capitalists looked to the huge markets of India, Russia, Turkey and South America as El Dorado's in which to get rid of their surplus products. These areas are now well marked on the productive map and are rapidly becoming first-class productive units with their own unemployment shadows looming menacingly ahead.

In each of these backward areas the aid of European and American trained experts has been invoked, so that their industrial development is progressing faster than the advanced countries formerly did, as the latter had to do the pioneering.

The future prospect then is one of growing unemployment and growing insecurity for those who were accustomed to believe they held "permanent" jobs. Even the bank clerk, who formerly regarded himself as among the "aristocracy of labour" is being hard hit by the new developments in mechanisation. The number of girls in banks who now, with the aid of machinery, do the work formerly only entrusted to trained men, has increased to such an extent that it has become necessary for the Bank Officers' Guild to appoint a full-time official to organise them and attend to their welfare.

All the political wire-pulling and programme making cannot overcome this obstacle. The growing insecurity and misery of the workers is solely due to their slave position, to the fact that before they can eat or drink they must sell their working power to a master. It is true a few try to avoid the necessity either by robbing or by trying to live on the crumbs of charity. But both ways are unstable and a glaring illustration of the rottenness at the root of the present order of things.

Until the workers grasp the elementary facts of their wage-slavery and the utter hopelessness of any solution but Socialism, the unemployment problem and their other ills will continue to increase in aggravation.

In spite of the attempts of blind leaders of the blind to exploit such situations as that arising out of the means test the fact remains that the mass of the workers do not understand their slave position and consequently small temporary ameliorations are sufficient to disperse the apparent revolutionary fervour and battalions of unemployed marchers and rioters fade away. An example of how far the unemployed are from grasping the real position is illustrated by a report in *The Star* (October 6th) of an incident that occurred at Ilford. The report runs as follows:—

Eighty unemployed stopped roadmaking work in Eton Road, Ilford, to-day, because, they said, the 20 workers were not local men.

The unemployed first marched to the town hall and interviewed the borough surveyor. Then they went to Eton Road, where they called on the foreman to stop his men. This was done without any disturbance.

The job was held up until an arrangement was reached with the contractor that local men should start work to-morrow.

Ilford Council, in their contracts for work of this description, stipulate that 60 per cent. of the men engaged shall be local.

Here is a blatant illustration of the narrowness bred out of the fight for "immediate ends" beloved of the Communist and the generations of Labour misleaders. One of the elementary principles the worker must grasp, if he wishes to be free, is that local and national boundaries disappear in the great class war of worker and capitalist. The workers of the world have one interest as opposed to the interests of the capitalists and the workers must unite to abolish capitalism and not allow themselves to be split up into warring groups like dogs fighting for the bones thrown to them.

The means test, and various other disabilities that at times press heavily upon sections of the workers are products of capitalism, and the people who put these things into operation have been placed in possession of the power to do so by the overwhelming majority of the workers at elections. While the workers agree by their votes to maintain capitalism it is futile for them to complain about particular evils of the system.

There is only one way in which the employed and the unemployed can obtain lasting amelioration of their lot, and that way is revolutionary political action to bring Socialism to birth out of capitalism.

GILMAC.

### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

## Capital

Capital is money invested for the purpose of profit. A glance at any of the company prospectuses that figure so often in the papers is convincing evidence of this. Whenever a new company commences business, or an old one proposes extending its business, an appeal is made for capital—money from investors. To obtain this money the company issues a prospectus in which figures are given with the object of proving to the prospective investor that dividends will be good and dependable.

An illustration may make the position plainer.

In the *Evening News* one day there appeared a notice on behalf of Parkinson & Cowan, Ltd. According to it the company offered for subscription 150,000 ordinary shares of £1 each at 25s. per share. Underneath this came the statement: "The company has in every year since its incorporation in 1900 paid a dividend on its ordinary share capital; these dividends have averaged over 8½ per cent. per annum for the whole period of thirty years." Then followed a list of profits and dividends, showing that from 1927 to 1930 dividends of 10 per cent. were paid each year. The last paragraph gave the reason for the issue:—

There is a continued and growing demand for gas and electricity for heating, lighting, cooking and other domestic purposes, and the directors anticipate further expansion of the company's business.

It will be seen that the company proposed extending its business, and for this purpose called for further capital, assuring the investing people that the company was making good and regular profits, and consequently regular dividends were assured. Dividends, of course, come out of, and depend upon, profits. What profits come out of, we will see in a moment.

The bulk of the production and distribution of wealth to-day in this country is carried on by companies that obtained their capital for starting operations, and later, for extending their operations, by the method illustrated above.

The capital obtained is spent on plant, machinery, raw materials and labour, and the business begins to take shape. The capitalist who invests may be in England, France, Germany or Africa. American capitalists invest in England; English capitalists invest in America. When it suits them, American groups cry that "Capital is going abroad"; and groups in Japan, Germany and England do likewise, because capital is international—it knows no country as its own. It is always going abroad and coming home.

The capitalist who invests in a company receives his voucher entitling him to dividends on his investments and then he has nothing more to do but sit down or roam while he waits for the dividends to roll in. And now let us see why they roll in.

Among the things the company buys with the

fresh capital obtained is one that gives a greater return than it costs—the labour power of the worker. A worker produces in a day's work goods of far more value than his wages—the price of his labour power—will purchase. Year by year the difference between what the worker produces and what he gets grows greater and greater, owing to improved organisation and labour-saving devices. The difference between the value of the labourer's work and the value he gets is surplus value. From this surplus value comes the profits the company dangles alluringly before the investor, and provides the latter with his dividends. Capital, then, is based upon the exploitation of the worker.

GILMAC.

## The Communist Party Shirks Debate

On several occasions the Communist Party have played the trick which the letter below illustrates. To impress an audience their speakers will issue a challenge to debate, but if the challenge is accepted the Communist Party subsequently repudiates it. The following letter was sent to the West Ham Branch of the S.P.G.B., in reply to a letter asking for the debate to be arranged:—

The Communist Party of Great Britain,  
West Ham Local.

Reply to 11, Carson Road,  
Plaistow, E.16.  
Sept. 12th, 1932.

Mr. P. Hallard.  
Dear Sir,  
Re your letter of the 4th inst., enquiries have been made into the authenticity of the challenge, and we are forced to the conclusion that the challenge emanated from an irresponsible source.

Undoubtedly it was issued from our platform, but the speaker was not a member of the Communist Party, and was, no doubt, unaware that the Communist Party sees no useful purpose served in entering into debates with the S.P.G.B.

Yours faithfully,  
(Organiser) S. WARREN.

## An Englishman's Home!

The Ministry of Health report of the census taken last year contains information of the abominable housing conditions suffered by numbers of London workers:—

Despite a general improvement there were still 2,086 families of from six to ten persons occupying a single room when the census was taken.—*News Chronicle*, June 24th.

## Pioneers, Oh Pioneers!

The *Observer* for June 26th gives an extract from their paper of a hundred years ago, which contains the following:—

The expedition sent out by the American Government in 1820-21 to explore the Rocky Mountains has at length been heard of after an absence of eleven years.

While west of the mountains they fell in with a tribe called the Copper Indians, who receive their name from owning extensive copper mines; 300 of them, armed with bows and copper darts, attacked the company in day time; a severe action ensued, and only about 30 of the Indians escaped; the rest were killed or wounded, with a loss of two killed of the company. (Italics ours.)



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## The Socialist Standard

NOVEMBER



1932

## The Steam and the Safety Valve

## Limits of Unemployed Demonstrations

There is a saying that history repeats itself, first as a tragedy then as a farce. It might be added that once the farce has begun apparently nothing on earth will prevent some of the actors in it from repeating it indefinitely. Not all the experience of generations will teach the I.L.P. and Communist Party that unemployed riots and demonstrations, whatever else they may achieve, do not lead to Socialism. Still, they repeat their parrot piece that once the workers can be got to kick about any one grievance the conflict with the authorities will intensify until the whole working class is involved and capitalism overthrown. So the unemployed riots in Croydon and Belfast are hailed as the beginning of revolution. What is it to Mr. Maxton that the unemployed in Croydon flared up and rushed the Council Chamber exactly 30 years ago, and that troops were brought out on the streets of Belfast in 1907; that the authorities have never in the 50 years since that period been scared as they were at the unemployed riots in the 'eighties; and that the miserable exploitation of unemployed hunger marchers was tried out with little result in the pre-War depressions and the panicky days of 1921? While it is desirable that the unemployed should be aggressive, yet if they get some concession (sometimes even if they get nothing but cracked heads) these movements, based on the uninstructed discontent of non-Socialists, simply peter out and leave nothing permanent behind. What happens is that if the dis-

content is sufficiently great the capitalist parties rush in and lead it into safe channels or buy the gratitude of the discontented with small concessions. As soon as conditions look more favourable to them, the capitalists—always seeking to keep down the burden of taxes—cut the concession to whatever limit they and their political agents consider safe.

At the present moment, when the discontent of the unemployed has become manifest through sporadic rioting and demonstrations, the capitalist politicians are falling over themselves to gain or keep the support of these groups. So, suddenly half the London newspapers have taken up the grievances. Sir Herbert Samuel, the Liberal leader, having already collared the Communist slogan of "more trade with Russia," now takes their other strong plank and demands that something be done about the means test. Then the Prime Minister promises that the Government will immediately look into the matter. All of which means that the 10 per cent. cut last autumn and the imposition of the Poor Law test may have gone just a little beyond the limit deemed safe for electoral purposes. Steam pressure is rising, and the safety valve must be eased a little.

An illustration of the way in which this has been done in the past is given by the changes in the amount of unemployment pay, sometimes going up when discontent is rife, then being reduced when the capitalists think that a reduction can be put over without disturbing the workers' loyalty to capitalism and capitalist parties.

Before the War unemployment insurance applied to only a few workers, and the amount of benefit was 7s. a week. This was a contributory scheme.

At the end of the War, when the difficult problem of demobilisation had to be faced, the Government gave a "donation" to ex-soldiers of 24s. a week for 26 weeks (see *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, November, 1918, p. 436). Civil workers received the same amount, but for 13 weeks only. Dependent children under both scales were allowed 6s. for the first child and 3s. for others.

On December 12th, 1918, the rates were raised to 29s. for a man and 25s. for a woman (see *Gazette*, September, 1919).

After the 26 or 13 weeks' period the pay was on a lower scale of 20s. for a man and 15s. for a woman.

Then, under the 1920 Act (with prices rising, but the Government less panicky) the amounts were reduced to 15s. and 12s., with no allowance for dependents, and the scheme was now put on a contributory basis.

In 1921, when unemployment had reached large dimensions and unrest was widespread, dependents were admitted to benefit (5s. for a wife and 1s. for each child).

In 1924 the man's benefit was raised to 18s. and

the woman's to 15s., with 5s. for a wife and 2s. for each child.

In 1928 the man's allowance was reduced to 17s., the woman's was left unchanged at 15s., but the wife's allowance was raised to 7s.

In March, 1930, the wife's allowance was raised again to 9s. (All the above information is given in the 20th Abstract of Labour Statistics, pages 62-67).

Finally, under the influence of the crisis last autumn, the rates were cut by about 10 per cent., a man receiving 15s. 3d., a wife 8s., and a single woman 13s. 6d. The children's allowances were left at 2s.

So the I.L.P. and the Communists who believe in the theory of leading discontented non-Socialists on and on to Socialism, are now fighting to get back the 1s. 9d. which was deducted last year. After which they will still have another 12s. to go before they progress back to the unemployed pay of the demobilised soldier in 1919.

## Snowden's Goodbye

On September 28th, Philip Snowden (now a noble Lord) wrote a letter to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald (not yet a noble Lord) giving his reasons for resigning from the National Government. Whether he proposes staging a "come-back" as leader of the Liberal Party, we do not, of course, know, but the possible future appearance at a general election of Ramsay MacDonald leading the Tories and the noble Lord leading the Liberals would certainly add to the gaiety of elections.

Lord Snowden's long letter contains only one reference to the workers, that since the National Government has been in existence "unemployment has greatly increased."

The following extracts from his letter (taken from the *News-Chronicle*, September 29th) give the basis of his reasons for leaving, and are an illuminating expression of his outlook and where his sympathies lie.

He writes:—

But I can no longer, without loss of all self-respect, remain a member of a Government which is pursuing a policy which I believe is disastrous to the welfare of the country, which will lead to the disruption of the Empire, and which is fraught with great danger to our international relations. (Italics ours.)

The main purpose for which the National Government was formed has been achieved. . . . The acute national emergency which then existed no longer exists. . . . The Budget has been balanced; *stern economies have been enforced; borrowing for the dole has been stopped*; a great conversion scheme has been successfully carried through; and the threat to our national credit has been removed. (Italics ours.)

The Agreements (Ottawa) have surrendered our fiscal autonomy, and handed over to the Dominions the control of British trade policy, reducing this country below the status of a Dominion.

You cannot expect Free Traders to acquiesce, even passively in such a policy of national humiliation and bondage.

How sad. How *very* sad! Like the sea waves that always keep returning and telling the same old tale. After helping to enforce stern economies and stopping borrowing for the dole, to be faced with the disruption of the Empire and national humiliation. It is really too harrowing. Will it move to tears the three million unemployed and the workers who have had their wages reduced?

Anyhow, the *News-Chronicle* for October 17th informs us that Lady Snowden (with portrait, as usual) is supporting the proposal of Sir Landon Ronald for the broadcast of an appropriate prelude to the Two Minutes' Silence on Armistice Day. On the same page is a reference to a broadcast on disarmament by five Fellows of Oxford Colleges. The reference commences:—

The writers outline the present alarming state of Europe and the growth of a situation containing the seeds of war, . . .

However, although he has, for the moment, said goodbye to the Government, Lord Snowden is not out of the "news." In a message to the National Association of Building Societies he is reported as delivering himself of the following:—

By the help which this institution offers, about one-fourth of the houses in this country are now owned by their occupiers. The social significance of this fact is tremendous. It has given to this large part of the population a feeling of security and independence.

Has the noble Lord any conception of the existence of these people who have tied a millstone around their necks for years? The number who, through illness or unemployment, have had to give up their "own" houses and seen the small savings they had used thrown away after stinting themselves and struggling fruitlessly to meet the demands of the building societies and the expenses of their jerry-built houses?

The value of an Englishman's home and the reward of "thrift" is shown up in a significant manner by the following extract from the *News-Chronicle* of October 13th:—

CARDIFF, Wednesday.

The Ministry of Labour are likely to become the owners of considerable house property in the mining towns of South Wales in the near future as the result of instructions recently sent to local public assistance committees.

This instruction, which is issued under the powers of the Poor Law (Public Assistance) Act of last year, requires that any applicant for relief who is an owner of property in any shape or form must first of all lodge the deeds of such property with the Public Assistance Committee.

A member of the Pontypridd Public Assistance Committee to whom I spoke to-day said the order had caused much resentment, particularly in view of the fact that hundreds of aged ex-miners, who had bought their cottage homes with their life's savings, had, owing to the depression, come to the end of their resources and were now compelled to part with the last remaining link with prosperity and happy days.

UNABLE TO REPAY.

Doubtless, said the Member, the Ministry will compel us to hold these deeds until the loans from the Public Assistance Committee are repaid. As, however, there is little likelihood of many of them



being ever in a position to do this the Government looks like acquiring a lot of cheap house property.

From the above the "social significance of ownership" certainly does appear to be "tremendous" when it is a case of workers "owning" houses which they get if they live long enough, keep up the payments, and the houses are still standing at the end of the term.

Fellow workers, how much longer will you allow shallow self-seekers, like Snowden and his kind, to throw dust in your eyes and divert you from the only thing that matters—the control of your destinies by yourselves.

GILMAC.

## The Dispute in the Textile Trades

In January, 1931, the Textile employers declared a lock-out over wages and the attempt to secure the introduction of the more-loom-to-a-weaver system. The workers put up a stronger resistance than the employers had anticipated (all the stronger because the trade union members resolutely refused to give their officials power to negotiate), and on February 16th the lock-out was withdrawn. The employers continued to press this year for wage reductions and more looms—and on July 25th a strike began at Burnley, followed on August 29th by a general stoppage of work by the weavers. After a dispute lasting for a month, work was resumed on September 28th, most of the strikers being taken on again. The terms were a heavy defeat for the workers; wages are reduced by about eight-and-a-half per cent. (1s. 8½d. in the £), the more-loom system is to be introduced as soon as a Conciliation Committee is appointed, which is expected to be within two months, and the provision for reinstating strikers is most unsatisfactory. The Employers' central organisation is merely bound "to recommend its local associations strongly to persuade all their members to offer employment as speedily as possible to all operatives who have been displaced." How unsatisfactory this is will be seen from the fact that one of the questions at issue in the general dispute was the employers' refusal to reinstate strikers already out at Burnley.

Part of the weakness of the textile workers is plainly due to disunity and faulty organisation. The Weavers' Amalgamation consists at present of 36 district associations, each of which has complete autonomy and can act independently of the others. One of the results of the strike failure is a renewed move to form the 36 associations into one centralised union. On the other hand, the Nelson Weavers' Association is balloting on a proposal to withdraw from the amalgamation because of dissatisfaction with the settlement, and at Burnley a new local union has been formed in

opposition to the Burnley Weavers' Association, which is also a local organisation. The new union is stressing the principles (embodied in its rules) that "no strike will be initiated or ended without members meeting" and "members' decision in any dispute shall be final" (*Manchester Guardian*, October 17th). One of the provisional officials said that the members thought it would be easier to form a new body than to reform the old, and that considerable support is being given among the weavers.

A still further cause of weakness is the failure of the textile workers as a whole to act together. Emboldened by their victory over the weavers the employers then pressed their demand for reductions of pay of the spinners. At first the employers declared that on no consideration whatever would they agree to a smaller reduction than 1s. 8½d. in the £ (the figure accepted by the weavers in their settlement).

The unions had already agreed (*Manchester Guardian*, October 19th) to accept a reduction of 9½d. in the £, and when a lock-out was threatened for Monday, October 24th, a settlement was reached on the basis of a reduction of 1s. 6½d. in the £.

One lesson of these disputes is obvious. The workers cannot hope to put up the maximum resistance that conditions will allow if they are hopelessly divided, giving the employers the opportunity of depleting their funds by sectional disputes and defeating them piecemeal.

H.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

H. A. Heddon, 1120, East Century Blvd., Los Angeles, California.—Thanks for your letter. The "Open Letter to Norman Thomas" is rather out of our line. Why not send it to Norman Thomas's own paper? Our criticism of his position would be different from yours. We do not agree that capitalism is near total collapse. Nor do we agree that a socialist programme would at present attract as much support as a reformist programme. If Norman Thomas put the Socialist case he would lose the support he now gets from reformists, but his opposition to Socialism does not prevent you and other Socialists from lining up with the Workers' Socialist Party of the U.S.A. and helping on the work of making Socialists.

ED. COMM.

"One who was in Russia."—If this correspondent will give his name and address, not necessarily for publication, we will reply to his letter.

ED. COMM.

## Socialists and "Doing Nothing"

Dear Sir, Blackburn. Sept. 15th, 1932.

I have been a reader of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for the past year or so, and I find that the "letter to a young Socialist" in the current issue expresses very well indeed the point of view consistently put forward by you. As a worker who is in a regular job and not at present suffering the pangs of hunger, I can sit back in my chair (after reading this article) and say "very good, indeed."

I quite agree that we must go on educating the workers until we have an intelligent class conscious democracy, but I wonder if I, and you, too, my dear sir, would be quite so satisfied to wait, if we happened to be out of job and well below the starvation line. Suffering is increasing rapidly among the workers, as we all know, and it is very easy for us to tell them to be patient, but quite a different matter when in their position. Do you think it is possible to make all the workers understand Marxism any more than it is possible to make them all understand the technicalities of wireless. Many of them have not the desire to do so, even if they had the intelligence. J. F.

Reply.

Our correspondent has only partly grasped the point of the article to which he refers ("The Time for Action," September *SOCIALIST STANDARD*). We say that certain forms of activity which deal with effects are only of limited use and that certain other forms are useless and dangerous, but we certainly do not add, as our correspondent seems to imagine we do, that therefore the workers should do nothing. We do not say that they should be patient and passive, but that they should act intelligently. The only activities which will lead to emancipation, studying and teaching Socialist principles and organising to take the necessary action to get Socialism, are not jobs for those who are satisfied to sit back in their chairs and wait. Nor are they jobs beyond the capacity of the average worker. Our correspondent asserts that it is not possible to get all the workers to understand the technicalities of wireless. True, but then the majority of the workers do not need or desire to do so. But J.G., we notice, does not commit himself to the further assertion that the workers are incapable of doing so. Actually, the workers have to understand the technicalities of the productive and other processes at which they earn their living. Are they capable of running industry but incapable of understanding the running of society? When it is driven home to the workers that understanding the latter is at least as important to them as the former, they will grasp it without much difficulty.

Incidentally, we do not agree with the view of J.G., that the workers in work have no troubles and have reason to be satisfied. Neither do they, for millions of them show signs of active if misdirected dissatisfaction with the conditions of their lives.

It would have been helpful if J.G. had told us what he thinks the unemployed can usefully do, since he agrees with us that blind revolt is useless, but at the same time rejects intelligent revolutionary action.

ED. COMM.

## A Letter from Mr. Walton Newbold

Fulham, London, S.W.6  
3rd Sept., 1932.

The Editor, THE SOCIALIST STANDARD,  
TELL THE TRUTH AND RIDDLE THE  
OPPORTUNISTS.

Dear Comrade,

In saying that I am now supporting the Maxtonites and implying that I have joined the I.L.P. once more, you are reading into the letter, headed, "The Puritan Strain" and appearing in *The New Clarion* recently, much more than you are entitled to do. Certainly, I admire Maxton and Brockway, Jennie Lee and Geo. Buchanan for having the courage of their convictions and taking the road into what may mean the abandonment of the flesh-pots, far away from which you will never find Laski, Brailstord, Wise or Dollan. For the courage of your convictions and the same disregard of advancement I have always admired the S.P.G.B., about whom I could equally well have said in that concluding sentence of my letter: "I do not agree with the (I.L.P.) in much, but they have the courage of their convictions."

I was brought up, and have again become, a Quaker. Twenty-five years I have been moving around the whole Labour and Socialist Movement and here and there and now and then I have found men and women who dared to say what they thought and damn the consequence to their careers. But for the most part the Movement lacks "guts." Where there is no vision, it is quite true, the people perish. That is why the most appalling mess of all will be the Third Labour Government. But that is inevitable. That you and I know. Now, as to my going to Motherwell in 1918, and the means I took most deliberately to force the Catholic clergy, step by step, to reveal themselves as the enemies of Socialism and to bring them into antagonism to the interests of the Irish as a nation struggling to be free, and as workers needing either to limit their families or to break away from the Catholic morality of private property on the basis of the patriarchal family. When I went there I was still a member of the Society of Friends. A priest charged me with being an atheist. The letters I produced caused him not only to apologise but, praising the society, practically to call on Catholics to vote for me.

Well was I aware of the fact that the worst enemy the Socialist Movement has ever had in its ranks was the late John Wheatley. The Catholic Socialist Society we now know to have been "a contradiction in terms." Pius XI tells us no Catholic can be any kind of a Socialist. John Wheatley substituted for Socialism his plans for Housing Reform. He turned the whole Socialist Movement of Scotland, including old Freethinkers like John Downie, of Wishaw, down that false scent. Motherwell and Wishaw were the worst-housed burghs in Scotland. With my eyes on John Wheatley I chose to fight in Motherwell.

The Catholic clergy dared not come out openly against the republican independence for Ireland. For that, if I was to stand, I had to break with the Labour Party. When the Clyde division came to Westminster I took good care that I spoke in the House of Commons ahead of John Wheatley. Always, John Wheatley was trailing behind me. Always, John MacLean was advising me. Together, we insulated John Wheatley. We did it as individuals and so committed no one but our two selves.

It was not John Wheatley who broke the discipline of the Labour Party, but myself, supported by an old garrison-soldier and pioneer of the Labour Colleges, George Barker, of Abertillery, when we divided the House on May Day, 1923, against Singapore Naval Base. Following up, I opposed other Navy Votes. John Wheatley, Geo. Buchanan and Tom Henderson joined me. Deliberately and in defiance of the Communist Party "polbureau" (which had ordered me to demonstrate in Sheffield that day) did I force this split in Labour Party discipline on armaments. Deliberately and without consulting "the polbureau," did I stage my suspension from the House in a debate on the danger of a war.



Deliberately, did I steal John Wheatley's thunder in the debate on the Housing Bill, and cause him to come to me afterwards urging and telling me "Your business is to preach revolution! Mine to preach reform! Keep to your job!"

Deliberately, in the spring of 1926, did I make it possible for the advocates of Birth Control to go to the Clyde via Motherwell to start a campaign that I knew must split "the Left" so ingeniously got together by John Wheatley. The manoeuvre succeeded and the I.L.P. fell a-quarrelling, "Marxists" for birth-control propaganda, Catholics and all opportunists against it.

When the riot against me in Wishaw in June, 1926, occurred and I saw the chief Catholic town councillor inciting the crowd on because of my attack on the Rev. Barr and his opposition to birth control, I knew that I had lit a fire in Motherwell and Wishaw that will not finally go out till it has burned the Catholic church out of the West of Scotland.

Clericalism is the enemy on "the Right," "Communism" of Moscow's Comintern the enemy on "the Left." I have used them both, and the taste on my tongue is very sweet.

Wishing you many years of good, hard hitting and fearless statement of what seems to you to be the truth.

Yours fraternally,

WALTON NEWBOLD.

Reply.

We accept the correction about the I.L.P. but disagree with many of the views expressed in the letter.

H.

### Scraps from the Press

The railway workers are promised a wage cut on the usual fantastic ground that the Companies were not working on a profitable basis. It is, therefore, interesting to read the notice in the *Evening News* (20th October) which states that owing to heavy over-subscription, the lists for Southern Railway £4,750,000 Debenture Stock issue have been closed. Evidently the capitalists consider the railways a profitable investment, which means that the railway workers are producing plenty of surplus value already. It is also an illustration that there is plenty of money available for investment—perhaps the credit cranks will make a note of it.

The *News Chronicle* for October 3rd records the fact that Mr. Samuel Insull, a former United States electricity magnate, was at one time a director of 85 companies, chairman of 65, and president of 11. One wonders how much time per year (allowing for the periodical cruise, etc.) he was able to devote to each company, and also whether his absence was noticed when he was away. Perhaps if workers ponder a little over cases like this they will realize what little part the capitalists play in the actual running of industry.

The champions of "self-help" and the boosters of the "Great Man" theory appear to be having a thin time of late years. Hatry, Kreuger, Insull, and the rest have given their theories some nasty shocks. It is becoming almost a commonplace to learn, after one of the frequent financial crashes,

that the "great man" at the centre was responsible. In fact, however the "great man" is made the scapegoat for their cowardly and fat-headed ideas.

The following shows how sectional interests clash over Free Trade in Germany. Herr Krupp, head of Krupp's works and president of the Federation of German Industries, along with Dr. Luther, president of the Reichsbank, have protested against the carrying out of the quota system by the Von Papen Cabinet. On the other hand, the agricultural interests are becoming alarmed lest the quota system should be suspended. Herr Hugo Stinnes has aligned himself with the agricultural interests in support of the restriction of imports.

The internecine warfare between capitalists over Protection and Free Trade may push into the background the movement of the German Fascists in the near future. And while German and English workers are suffering from the miseries arising out of their bondage to Capitalism, their self-appointed spokesman in the two countries will be shouting themselves hoarse over imports and exports—matters that are of real interest only to the capitalist.

The Church struggles hard to keep up with the times—and keep its congregations and its magic. In these days of trials and troubles, with growing unemployment and restive workers, one of the Church's principal spokesmen, Dr. Barnes, the Bishop of Birmingham, has made a portentous pronouncement. Speaking at Westminster Abbey on the 11th October, he said:

Again, the social evil which has increased most disastrously in our times is gambling. In Ireland the Roman Church is all powerful and the Dublin hospital sweepstakes flourish.

Perhaps if the noble Bishop were in the ranks of the unemployed he would hold other views of the nature of the social evil. Anyhow, his working-class parishioners could give him some information on the subject. But the Church has always been a prop of oppression, and its professional advocates can always be depended upon to find any cause but the real cause of the social evils suffered by the majority of the population.

As the Armistice will shortly be celebrated, it is fitting to recall to mind "poor little Belgium" and all that was said about her sufferings during the Great War. Workers in England who fought in Belgium in the effort to end all wars may be interested to learn that war in Belgium did not end with the Armistice.

BRUSSELS, Saturday. Troops were to-day sent to the coalfields, where an ugly situation arising out of the strike over wages led to battles with the police, who had been given orders to disperse gatherings.

At Charleroi, early this afternoon, three police

and several strikers were injured in a collision. Two of the police were seriously hurt. At Péronnes, near Binche, fifteen strikers were slightly hurt when the police charged a crowd that had refused to disperse.

The dispatch of troops followed a meeting between the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Defence. A regiment from the Malines garrison has been sent to Mons, and one from the Arlon garrison to Charleroi.—Reuter. *Observer*, July 9th.

Is comment on the above needed?

Under the Washington Treaty the tonnage of warships was restricted, and on this account the Treaty was boomed as a great step forward in disarmament and an indication of the pacific intentions of the participants. Ever since, however, each nation has been endeavouring to produce more effective and murderous implements with a reduced tonnage, and in this, America, the leading advocate of this "pacifism," has had the most success, as witness their new and efficient battle cruisers.

The *Evening News* of the 17th July reports a further step forward in America. At the end of the War it was decided that an aeroplane carrier, to be effective, must be of at least 20,000 tons. Under the Washington Treaty, America was only allowed a total tonnage of 135,000 tons for aircraft carriers; in other words, they were allowed about seven of these vessels, the idea presumably being to reduce the number of these ships that might be built. The result, however, has merely been to set American designers the problem of obtaining all the assistance they needed from such ships within the stipulated 135,000 tons. As the *Evening News* puts it:—

But America wants plane carriers on the Atlantic as well as the Pacific and also in the Far East, so that her strategy would be badly cramped by the small number of large ships allowed. It is this point, in addition to the financial side, that has American designers on their mettle.

And the designers have risen to the occasion and produced a ship of 13,800 tons that "will be the last word in construction, carrying no fewer than 75 planes." Another step towards the peace of the world!

GILMAC.

The capitalist press occasionally amuses us by holding up their hands in horror at the possibility of "free love" under Socialism. That love is not absolutely free under capitalism is proved by the following extract from the *Croydon Times* (10/9/32):—

Young man, refined, aged 28 years, dark, height 5ft. 9in., considered good looking, would marry lady age up to 40 years, who could place him in a better position. Genuine; small capital. Write in confidence. Photo exchanged.

The extract shows to what extent ideas of morality can be influenced by economic conditions.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION"

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### York and Ottawa

It is not often that one of the leading lights of science can be quoted as authority for what Socialists have been saying for years, but the speech of the President of the British Association, Sir Alfred Ewing, at their meeting at York, on August 31st, 1932, as reported in the *Daily Herald* of September 1st, certainly gives some colour to the view and contains food for thought. He says:—

More and more does mechanical effort take the place of human effort, not only in manufacture, but even in the primitive task of tilling the ground.

Almost automatically the machine delivers a stream of goods in the creation of which the workman has taken little part. . . . He has lost the joy of craftsmanship and in many cases unemployment is thrust upon him more saddening than drudgery.

. . . . And the world finds itself glutted with competitive commodities produced in a quantity too great to be absorbed.

This is what we of the Socialist Party have been saying for years. Capitalism has long since provided the means of solving the problems of production, and we can produce more than enough for all. Production is social, but ownership is not social—hence the "problems" that beset our masters and the miseries the workers endure. These will continue until the working class see the necessity of studying Socialism, the only remedy for these things, and then organising to obtain it. There is no hope in the present system. Let Sir Alfred Ewin speak again (ibid):—

The cornucopia of the engineer has been shaken all over the earth, scattering everywhere an endowment of previously unimagined and unpossessed powers and capacities, but we are aware that the engineer's gifts have been, and may be, grievously abused. In some there is tragedy as well as present burden. Man was ethically unprepared for so great a bounty. . . . The command of Nature has been put into his hands before he knows how to command himself.

Exactly. No doubt a great many workmen know of cases where "the engineer's gifts" have been "grievously abused" in the interest of profit, and many are fully alive to the "present burden" of unemployment. But the sting is in the tail. "Man is not ready for the command of Nature," Sir Alfred says. Just so. He has not set about studying his position in order to bring about social ownership. Our friend is in this position himself, for he asks:—

"Where does this tremendous procession tend?" and "Where shall we look for a remedy?" And he answers: "I don't know."

Nor is he alone in this. Several English Cabinet Ministers have recently been across to Ottawa to try and find the same thing, but have returned empty handed. They have been wasting their time trying to find out how policies of reduced purchasing power (wages) can keep up with increased production. And we notice that Mr. J. Bromley (Secretary, Associated Society of Loco Engineers and Firemen) went along to



Ottawa with them "in an advisory capacity," in order to help them to find out how not to do it; and says:—

"He could not help it if they did not follow his advice" (*Daily Herald*, August 15th, 1932). We would suggest that this paid official's talents might be better used in the interests of his members on the railways, who look like having a wage cut, but apparently that is not of sufficient concern to this gentleman so long as he can offer himself "in an advisory capacity" to our masters and get a joy ride. Walter Citrine, of the T.U.C., was also there, helping to achieve the impossible.

Thus is shown the worthlessness of these leaders, and when the workers realise this, and set about organising for Socialism, these gentry will soon disappear—and the workers will find a ready solution to Sir Alfred Ewing's problems, and their own.

C. V. R.

## Notes by the Way

### Tall Stories from Russia.

Owing to technical deficiencies and the repercussions of the world crisis, the industrial development of Russia is failing to come up to expectations, and many exaggerated claims are now being written down. Information is not easy to obtain. For example, as soon as the monthly output figures in various branches of production began to fall below the figures for the preceding month and the corresponding month of the previous year, the monthly journal of the Soviet Bank in London conveniently ceased to publish the figures at all, although hitherto they had appeared regularly.

Much has been written of the enormous motor works built on "Ford" lines at Nijni Novgorod. It was declared open on November 1st, 1931, but it was soon apparent that it was beyond the present capacity of the Russian workers to operate this up-to-date mass production plant. Mr. Emrys Hughes (*Forward*, September 17th) writes of these difficulties, and then says:—

From nothing the output had reached 30 cars a day, and then 40. Order was slowly emerging from the chaos. Every day brought more experience; in 1933 Nijni would turn out 70,000 cars.

Mr. Hughes is, we believe, mistaken, his figures refer to "trucks" not passenger cars, although the works are equipped for both. The claim for 30 or 40 a day is far below the promised 70,000 a year, and a very sorry output in comparison with what was promised in January, 1932.

The *Moscow Daily News* Weekly Edition, (August 15th) publishes an article by Victor Vacsov dealing with the car output of the Nijni Novgorod works. In it Vacsov admits that "the automobile industry of the U.S.S.R., which is only

one year old, has not as yet produced any passenger cars. The first cars of a Ford Model-A type are now being produced."

He says that research is still going on to decide "What type of car is best suited to Soviet conditions."

The failure of the Nijni Novgorod works up to the present, incidentally, shows up many visitors to Russia who came back and reported that all was well. For example, there is the dramatic critic, Mr. Herbert Griffiths, who, in his "Seeing Soviet Russia," reported—on the strength of second hand accounts from expert eye witnesses—that it was a "star-turn"!

The Communists get very angry when doubt is cast on their figures and claims, but they should remember that they have themselves to blame. A Party which for years has preached the doctrine of "lying and subterfuge" (Lenin's words) as a method of gaining control of the workers' trade union organisations, can hardly complain if the world occasionally doubts their veracity.

### The Means Test and the Labour Party.

The agitation for the removal of the "Means Test" is instructive from several points of view. The unemployed man or woman ceases after 26 weeks in a year to be entitled to unemployment insurance pay on the ordinary conditions. He or she then has to apply for transitional benefit, which is granted in whole or in part according to the means of the applicant and his or her family. The decision is made by the Public Assistance Committee and is based on a minute inquiry into the savings, earnings, pension, etc., of all the members of the family. In short, it is the application of the years old Poor Law system to unemployment insurance pay—which has not prevented the Labour Party (which administered the system for Poor Law purposes when in office) from protesting indignantly at its use for unemployment insurance purposes.

### One for the Currency Cranks.

The sectional interests of manufacturing, land-owning and financial capitalists have always puzzled and misled the Labour Party and its satellites making them easy victims for the quacks who believe that the ills of capitalism can be cured by land tax or by currency juggling. Yet the situation is not difficult to grasp. The workers produce the wealth, the capitalists own it. Out of the mass of wealth they produce the workers receive wages based on their cost of living. Out of the remainder the capitalists must meet all the expenses of production, and the costs of government, etc. Then they divide up the balance on terms which are the subject of contract between themselves. In a time of expansion, when prices are rising, the capitalist who has goods to sell is

improving his position. At such a time—for example, during the War—the Labourites howl loudly about the "profiteer" and the "hard-faced business man." During the next phase of the normal cycle of capitalism, when prices are falling, it is the turn of the moneylending capitalist to prosper, the man who has contracted to receive a fixed money return on a certain sum lent or invested. Now it is he who is getting a larger and larger relative share of the total wealth of the capitalist class. Then the Labourite turns soft on his poor, dear friend, the manufacturing capitalist, and joins with him in denouncing the wicked bankers who "grow rich on adversity." What is overlooked all the time is that the workers, as a class, do not alter their general position whatever happens. The ups and downs of prices and interest rates are only a matter between the groups of capitalists themselves, and the changes that take place are not the work of conspiring individuals but are governed by the forces inherent in the capitalist system itself. It is not the "greed of the profiteer" which sends prices up at times of expansion—for, obviously, if it were he would never permit them to fall again. Nor is it the plotting of the bankers which sends prices down during a depression—for if bankers had much control over prices they would never suffer them to rise again.

At the moment the currency cranks are gaining widespread acceptance for their claim that the bankers can and do control prices and interest rates, and that the bankers have it in their power (by increasing or decreasing the supply of credit) to increase or decrease the volume of trade and the amount of money on deposit in the banks, and, in short, to make "prosperity" or "depression" as they choose.

A glance at a few facts will show the absurdity of this. If the banks have such power, why have they allowed the bank rate to fall from five-and-a-half per cent. in 1926 and six per cent. in 1931 to two per cent. now? Why have they allowed the rate of interest paid by the Government on Treasury Bills to fall to the extraordinarily low level of three-quarters of one per cent. And why, after making a concerted move to force the rate up in the week ended October 15th, 1932, were they compelled to take actually less than the week before, i.e., 15s. per £100 instead of 16s. 11d. (See *Daily Telegraph*, October 15th, 1932.) The fact is that bankers, just as much as any other section of the capitalist class, have to work within the limits set by the economic forces of capitalism. They can take advantage of, but cannot control, those forces. A glut of money seeking investment in gilt-edged securities (because of the declining profits and insecurity of industrial investments) will force the interest rates down in spite of all the bankers can do.

Similarly, with the stupid notion that bankers can "create credit" at will, and that bank deposits are the result of banks deciding to increase their loans to industry. This theory ignores the fact that banks want security for their loans and that money lent to produce more goods for an already glutted market would be money thrown away. The theory assumes that bank loans and bank deposits rise and fall simultaneously, the former being the cause of the latter. Actually, during the past year bank deposits have increased by over £100 million, while bank loans have not risen but have fallen by over £90 millions. (See *Evening Standard*, September 9th, 1932.) What has actually happened is what an understanding of capitalism leads us to expect. In times of depression, with production in excess of the demands of the market, the banks lend less because security is lacking; and investors seek safety in gilt-edged securities or by increasing their deposits with the banks. The theories of the currency cranks are in flat contradiction with the facts, but thousands of observers continue to be taken in by them, including many of the so-called labour leaders and representatives of labour colleges.

H.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7), where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Readers in Canada are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Canada at 204, Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand at 8, Whitehall Buildings, Upper Queen Street, Auckland, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

#### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b> ...	... ..	Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Walworth, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m. Finsbury Park, 4 p.m. Clapham Common, 3.30 p.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 7.30 p.m. Leyton, Whipps Cross Corner, 7.30 p.m.
<b>Monday</b> ...	... ..	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b> ...	... ..	The Fountain, Forest Gate Station, 8 p.m. Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m. Stepney Green, E.8., 8 p.m. Kenninghall Road, Clapton, E.8., 8 p.m. Cooks Road, Kennington Park Road (by Kennington Theatre), 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b> ...	... ..	Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m. Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball," Cambridge Road, E.8., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b> ...	... ..	Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b> ...	... ..	Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2, Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.
- BIRKENHEAD.**—Secretary, Edmund Howarth, 60, Park Road South, Birkenhead, Cheshire. Branch meets every Thursday 7.30 p.m., at 36, Cloughton Road. Lecture and discussion after branch business. Non-members invited.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.
- EAST LONDON.**—Communications to W. Thompson, 34, Queen Anne Road, E.9. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., at Limehouse Library (Committee Room) Commercial Road, E.
- ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. L.E.A., 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 60, Fisher Street, Dennistoun, Glasgow, E.1. Sec. W. Falconer, 128, Bluevale Street, E.1.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A, Graham Road Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.
- ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., G. White, 56, Addison Street, Ardwick. M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.
- NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—Branch meets in Limbley Ex-Service Men's Association, New Bridge Street, Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Discussions after branch business. Assistant Sec., W. E. Moran, 45, Bell Terrace, off Scotswood Road, Newcastle.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W. 10. Sec., A. Bentley, 31, Claremont Road, W.9.
- SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., J. Rodgers, 136, Rockingham Lane.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33, Ernest Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.
- TOOTING.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garrat Lane, Tooting, opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., J. Keable, 15, Haverhill Road, S.W.12.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

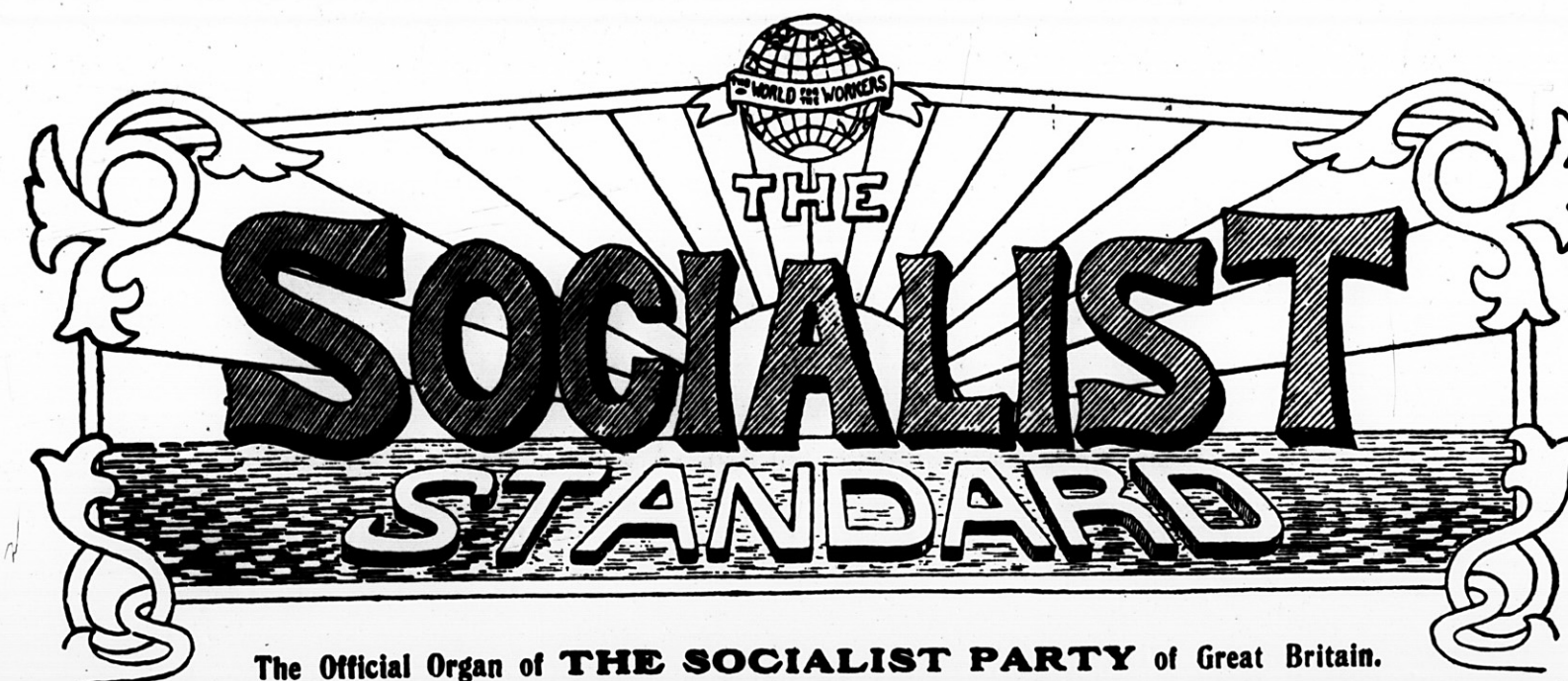
**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.
- WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.





No. 340. Vol. 29]

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE

# CONTENTS.

THE COMING NEW PROSPERITY IN AMERICA	49	SOCIALISM AND INDUSTRIAL UNITY	57
THE SCOTTISH SEASON	51	NOTES BY THE WAY	57
RAILWAY RATIONALIZATION AND PROFITS	52	ROOSEVELT AND THE AMERICAN WORKERS	60
A "MARXIST" WITH A HEART ATTACK	53	MACHINERY AND SOCIALISM	60
WILL POLITICS DO GOOD?	54	PRODUCING AND PAYING	61
NOTICES OF MEETINGS AND LECTURES	55	COMMON OWNERSHIP	62
SHORTER HOURS NO CURE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT	56	DEMANDS WHICH HAVE NOT EFFECTIVE BACKING	63
MUSSOLINI: THE REALITY BEHIND THE SHADOW	56	BRANCH DIRECTORY	64

## The Coming New Prosperity in America

### SHORTER HOURS : MORE WORK : LOWER PAY

UNCOUTH indeed is the hurricane that blows nobody good! Out of the great depression, at last it looks as if a little breeze might cool the brows of our poor capitalists here in the U.S.A. Profits have been nowhere near what they ought to be, dividends falling off, taxes going up, prices going down; and you wouldn't believe the amount of political grafting that has been going on at their expense! The tariff hasn't been acting right, crops have been exasperatingly abundant, so that agricultural prices are, as Mr. Hoover says, "hideously low." Even the Boll-Weevil proved disloyal by failing to destroy enough cotton, thus increasing unemployment among the brokers on the cotton exchange. Of course, wages did slip down a bit, here and there, pretty much all over; but still, you couldn't exactly say things were like they used to be in "normal" times. No, indeed!

But, maybe, happy days will come again. If our masters had to shell out to keep a lot of charities going, they also learned through these same charities just what a small amount the workers can be made to exist on, without in the least losing their love for the wage-system. The knowledge is

to be applied in a manner to profit the owners of wealth and the means of production thereof.

We are to have the shorter working week, whose virtues have been sung so long by trade unions and reform bodies, amongst which may be mentioned the so-called Socialist Party of America, the Communist Party, and the Industrial Union groups. The chorus was that the five-day week and the six-hour day is the cure for unemployment. Much noise was made, and vast statistics gathered, to show the benefits to workers and to capitalists as well. At St. Louis, in May, 1927, the Order of Railroad Telegraphers put it to the bosses neatly in a resolution which started thus:—

"Whereas, It is a demonstrable fact that a shorter work week is conducive to a *more intensive production* without an undue strain on the worker . . . (Italics mine).

You see, after all, the capitalists have political power and own the industries. So it was very necessary to sell the idea to them. A thoughtful worker could see the point at once. The capitalists, having great minds, capable of pondering all these things, thought more slowly.



Now, the capitalists long ago resigned themselves to having a considerable number of jobless workers around, even in the busiest times. It helped them keep wages down somewhere near the food, clothing and shelter level. But when the number of out-of-works gets up around a dozen millions, as it is now, you can't blame even a capitalist for losing his patience. So much idle labour-power costs a lot of money, it is a nuisance, and a menace to private property. As Mr. Gibson says (*Wall Street Journal*, October 17th, 1932):—

"Corporations and business firms which support unemployment relief funds may be insuring themselves against a semi-permanent government system of relief with *resultant taxes* over a long period of years, and *also may be averting social unrest spelling business disaster* . . ." (italics mine).

The Interstate Commerce Commission refuses to allow the New York Telephone Co. to charge to operating expense \$75,000 which they gave to the City's 1931 fund for the jobless, even though the Company pointed out that "in the absence of unemployment relief the general effect of the business depression might have been worse and riots or other disturbances might have injured the company's property" (*Business Week*, N.Y., October 12th).

Anyway, we are now in the midst of the "national share-the-work campaign," which is the new name of the shorter work-week movement. Directing the campaign are such sterling toilers for humanity as Walter C. Teagle, President, Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey, who hopes to report, "before winter, if possible," "that several million unemployed have been put back to work." Mr. Teagle's company adopted the five-day week some time back, and now the Socony-Vacuum Corporation states that, as from November 1st, "operations of the company will be placed on a five-day week, *with a corresponding reduction in pay*" (italics mine). (See *Wall Street Journal*, October 10th.)

Other work spreaders who are urging the idea on their fellow-capitalists are Alfred P. Sloan, President of General Motors; Fred. H. Ecker, President of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.; Paul W. Litchfield, of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.; L. C. Walker, President of the Shaw-Walker Co.; J. H. Rand, Chairman of Remington-Rand; and the whole manoeuvre is sponsored officially by our great engineering President, Herbert Hoover.

Of course, somebody *would* bring up some difficulties in the way of the plan. The National Industrial Conference Board made public a survey of 1,500 employers, with the discouraging remark:

"While, of course, the figures here given are averages that do not exclude individual cases with longer hours, it is none the less a striking fact that only four of the industries named provide an average of more than forty hours per week. By contrast,

as many as eight industries have reached so low an ebb of activity that they cannot provide so much as thirty hours a week." (*Times*, N.Y., October 14th, 1932.)

They gave further figures, which are here arranged for convenience of the reader (same source):—

Industry.	Hours per Week.	Industry.	Hours per Week.
Boot and shoe	41.7	Automobile	22
Meat-packing	47.9	Electrical mfg.	24.9
News and magazine printing	41.4	Iron and steel	24.8
Silk	40.6	Rubber	29.2

Foundries and machine shops were working only 27.4 hours, and—

"Other principal industries ranged between 30 and 40 hours."

The above was the state of affairs in August. Ordinary persons, like workers, might wonder how the five-day week and the six-hour day can be introduced in industries which aren't working even that long, and how this can put the unemployed back to work. But, shucks! this will simply make the job-spreading more interesting. It will be no puzzle at all for the great men. Maybe, we will get a three-day week out of it—"with corresponding reductions in pay"! The masters are not going to forget the lessons learned from their charity organisations. What they hope to achieve by this proposal is as follows:—

1. They would save millions in charity donations. The amount they had to tear themselves loose from last winter was agonizing, and already the (N.Y.) State Temporary Relief Administration estimates that \$10,000,000 monthly will be needed for relief of unemployed the coming winter (in New York alone) and—

"The estimate did not include funds to be raised privately . . ." (*New York Times*, October 18th, 1932).

2. The dole system would be staved off. (Voluntary giving has staved off permanent government relief, which would raise taxes. See above quote from *Wall Street Journal*.)

3. The workers will be more rested, therefore able to carry on "more intensive production" while working. This conclusion is amply supported by data compiled by the National Industrial Conference Board. Rival crews, or shifts, could be made up, and the friendly (!) rivalry between them will surely bring out some new high points in productivity.

4. We are assured that workers do not have to eat such large amounts as was formerly thought necessary; if they will only adopt the "scientific" menus being compiled for them by our dieticians, they can yield more energy with much less food. In Fayette County, Pennsylvania, it has been shown that a family of five can survive on one dollar per week! A working-class family, of course; a

capitalist family needs a bit more. Another thing: the doctors have for years pooh-pooed the advocates of fasting and dieting as a disease cure, but in the present emergency even the medicine men are going to face their duty and lay bare the facts. It seems they have been fooling us all the time about fasting. Dr. W. A. Evans, who conducts a daily column in the *Daily News* (U.S.A.), assures us (October 20th) that:—

"A normal man should be able to go without food for nearly two months."

This is not the first or only statement of the kind from orthodox sources, and more can be expected in the struggle to keep hungry workers from worrying about pork chops. Very useful when wages are about to be reduced.

To be sure, the sharpened competition which will be the life of trade with the coming of shorter weeks and days, will make necessary the introduction of more improved methods and machinery. The *Wall Street Journal* (October 14th) quotes "Iron Age":—

"The substitution of more efficient machine tools will eventually take place on a large scale."

The same issue quotes Walter P. Chrysler:—

"Our Plymouth plant has been completely reorganised to take full advantage of the tremendous advances that have been made in machine tool design and manufacturing methods during the past few years."

If the process is going on already, just wait till it gets going in earnest! The outcome, of course, will be the more rapid glutting of markets, with even worse unemployment than before; meanwhile, terrific increase of exploitation of those in work.

This will be the "New Prosperity." The next depression will surely be a humdinger! Would it be out of place, fellow-workers, to remind you that this is the wages-system, capitalism; and that Socialism is a practicable alternative?

SCOTT FRAMPTON,  
Workers' Socialist Party of U.S.A.

### Barnsley, Yorks.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD and other Party literature, and information about the Party, can be obtained from C. S. Parkinson, 12, Crookes Street, Barnsley.

### North West London.

Will members and sympathisers willing to co-operate in the formation of a branch in North West London communicate with Mr. G. Beeson, 56, Barnfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware; Mr. W. Edgley, 41, Brett Road, Stonebridge Park, N.W.10; or Mr. H. G. Holt, 36, Rosebank Avenue, Sudbury, Wembley.

A Branch is now in process of being formed.

## The Scottish Season

Amongst the publications which help to brighten the butterfly lives of the idle rich is "The Sketch." This paper records, in bright and witty language, the activities of our noble masters. In the issue of October 5th, 1932, "Marigold" describes the doings of her society friends, who have just returned from their annual pilgrimage to the French Riviera and are now in Scotland for the Scottish season. Apparently all the notabilities are there just now, including the Duchess of Bedford, who keeps herself fit upon the Macrihanish golf course, "one of the most magnificent in Scotland," and so inaccessible that many people cannot get there. For her ladyship, however, this is no drawback, as she is most "air-minded," and flits to and fro in her aeroplane, which she also uses to add to her already extensive knowledge of bird life, by flying to other places of bird interest.

We also learn that the Strathconas, who are immensely rich, love the lovely island of Colonsay, where they spend a large part of every summer, and keep open house for their many friends. All the guests must come by Lady Strathcona's yacht, which is most luxurious, and well fitted out.

The page containing all this tittle-tattle is enlivened by some illustrations of that hoary superstition, so dear to the minds of our masters, that workers, when transferred to the new bug hutches provided for them, inevitably use the bath as a receptacle for coal. This idea about the coal in the bath is a bit out of date just now, however, because the funds so generously provided by the Public Assistance Committees hardly provide for such a luxury as coal; the workers will now be able to use the bath for a *cold bath* at least—provided that they have sufficient cash to purchase the necessary carbohydrates to replace the warmth lost through their immersion in cold water!

It is perhaps unnecessary to point out the contrast between the comfortable lives of our masters and those of ourselves. We know that when in work we get a wage barely sufficient to house, feed, and clothe ourselves, and when we are out of work, that our position is well-nigh hopeless. J. L. Hodson, who has been investigating the position in Lancashire for the *News-Chronicle*, quotes in the issue of October 18th, 1932, the statement of Mr. Luke Bates, Secretary of the Blackburn Weavers, viz.:—

The Superintendent of the Weavers' Convalescent Home at Poulton told me that the Medical Officer there has recently said that 90 per cent. of the weavers coming to the Home are suffering from malnutrition. Those you see knocking about may not look much different, but I think they are taking it out of their stomachs; they must be living on a reduced diet."

Capitalist apologists have urged that Socialism would break up the home. We workers know from our own experience that in many cases the wife has



to go to work to support a husband out of work through no fault of his own. But, as a result of the administration of the Means Test, Capitalism has still further broken up the homes of hundreds of the unemployed, and sons and daughters have had to go into furnished rooms in order to ensure their getting the meagre pittance allowed them by the Government, which they have themselves voted into power.

The wealth which enables our masters to fly about to magnificent golf courses is the surplus value of which the workers are robbed in the course of their employment. This surplus value flows to the master class through their ownership of the means of production (land, mines, and factories, etc.). Therefore, in order to remedy their position, all that the workers have to do is to appropriate the means of production. They cannot do this by forming processions and getting their heads broken by the police. The road to our emancipation lies through Parliament, which controls the Army, Navy, and Police, and by voting our delegates there, we shall be in a position to control those forces and to establish Socialism. These delegates will enter Parliament as instruments of a working-class political party, whose instructions they will carry out. The Socialist Party of Great Britain is the only genuine Socialist party in this country, and we invite all those who agree with our Declaration of Principles to join with us and work for the establishment of a system of society where each shall do his share for the common good.

RAMO.

### Death Takes Away Another Old Comrade.

We regret to say that Comrade G. Seach died in a hospital on November 21st, after an illness of several months. So little did he think that death was near, that the day before he died he was regretting that bad health had kept him from participating in the work of the organisation, but he expected to carry on again when he came out of hospital.

Comrade Seach was, perhaps, better known to older members of the Party. Before and immediately after the War he did a considerable amount of speaking, which finally brought on throat trouble. After speaking for twenty minutes, he suffered from bleeding of the throat. On this account he had to give up platform work at last.

He was a sturdy comrade and a valuable worker for the Party, and it is with deep sorrow we place him among the growing band of those who are only our memories. To his family we extend our sympathy.

### Railway Rationalization and Profits

Ten years ago the British Railway Companies were amalgamated into four large groups, with a view (so it was said at the time) to more efficient working, better services, abolition of competition, etc., and greater profits.

During that period we have seen a rationalising process take place which has been of equal intensity with that in many industrial concerns, and the effects of the grouping are now, after ten years, beginning to be only too manifest to the railman and to "the man in the street."

This policy has been carried out with the usual plausible tales of company poverty and the necessity of working shoulder to shoulder with the employers, as witness Sir Josiah Stamp's famous letter to the L.M.S. staff, two or three years ago, asking the men to conserve stores and to work hard in this trying time. Also it has been well boosted for some years that traffic was falling and that things were going from bad to worse. This was, of course, "owing to the depression" and to road transport. Many large works, like Newton Heath and Crewe Steel Works and others, have been permanently shut down. Men have been stood off, and reduced in grade, and trains are now made up to greater weights. Various appliances have been brought into use to make men superfluous, and many who have been discharged have given long years of service. Also, last year, a reduction of pay was forced on the wages staff "to help out in this hour of trial." And now the Companies demand another cut, basing their claim on "the decline of dividends on the ordinary shares" (*Reynolds'*, October 23rd, 1932).

It is true that in the last year ordinary stock dividends fell, and that profits are rather lower, but not to the extent the Companies would have us believe. During the last five years, in spite of the depression, the profits have been well maintained until 1931. The following tables, taken from *Reynolds'* (October 16th, 23rd and 30th, 1932), show the total dividends paid by three Companies on the various classes of stock in the past five years.

#### Southern Railway Dividends.

(Figures represent thousands of pounds.)

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.
Loan & Deb.	1,754	1,754	1,754	1,753	1,753
Guar. & Pref.	2,501	2,601	2,601	2,676	2,751
Ordinary	2,009	2,009	2,167	1,773	1,103
Total	6,264	6,364	6,542	6,202	5,607

#### G.W.R. Dividends.

(Thousands of pounds.)

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.
Loan & Deb.	1,549	1,550	1,550	1,550	1,550
Guar. & Pref.	3,348	3,348	3,348	3,348	3,348
Ordinary	2,972	2,123	3,220	2,351	1,288
Total	7,869	7,021	8,118	7,249	6,186

#### L.N.E.R. Dividends.

(Thousands of pounds.)

	1927.	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.
Loan & Deb.	3,910	3,985	4,033	4,083	4,255
Guar. & Pref.	7,203	7,203	7,203	7,203	5,129
Ordinary	159	106	1,271	106	0
Total	11,272	11,294	12,507	11,393	9,384

It will be seen that, up to 1929, the profits showed a tendency to increase, but since then, although the dividends on Ordinary shares have fallen, the total distribution of profits was not far short of what it was before that year, and is by no means a slump, and not a bad bill at all for a "period of depression" and "crisis."

So much for the profits. Now what about the losses due to road competition? The "competition" shows signs of becoming more apparent than real, for all this time, quietly behind the scenes, the Companies have acquired controlling interests in many of the principal road companies, both passenger and goods, and in many cases openly run in alliance with them. Moreover, the rail companies have taken to the road themselves, under their own name and using their own stock in many places. There is obviously no danger of the Companies having to "sell up" just yet. All this propaganda of theirs is largely part of an attempt to force worse conditions on the railway workers.

Arising out of the redundancy of labour comes the cry of compensation for loss of employment and being "degraded." An inquiry into this and other matters has recently taken place at the Law Courts, and the railway managers stated their attitude to this demand in no uncertain terms. It should be here stated that the companies have "guaranteed" that men who were "permanent" in July, 1931, would not be discharged as a result of the pooling. Sir Josiah Stamp, of the L.M.S., stated at the Law Courts inquiry that "if things improved on the railways, it could be reasonably supposed this guarantee would be enlarged" (*Daily Herald*, November 3rd, 1932).

But the companies' advocate, Mr. Bruce Thomas, K.C., was frankly hostile to any further dabbled, and Sir R. Wedgwood, of the L.N.E.R., considered any such thing as "unnecessary and undesirable." This was to the Union demand for an outside arbitrator *re* discharges owing to the pool, and Sir W. Jowitt, on behalf of the Unions, summed up the position by saying that the companies wished to be plaintiff and judge at the same time.

But if the Unions gain their point, what then? Have they not had enough of "independent chairmen" and "arbitrators" and "umpires" to know what to expect? Is it not a lot of useless tattle? The only thing certain seems to be 38s. per week for the railman's basic rate. Why not set about looking for something better? Namely to organise for Socialism, and for society to run its

own industries for its own benefit? It will take no more trouble than all this niggling and quibbling. And the result, not 38s. per week and still insecurity, but a system whereby all can lead a happy and care-free existence, surrounded by plenty.

C. V. R.

### A "Marxist" with a Heart Attack

In a series of articles appearing in the *New Leader*, entitled "The Danger of Orthodoxy," Mr. J. Middleton Murry is making desperate efforts to graft on to Marxian economics a brand of emotionalism which he seems to think will make it more attractive. He finds Socialism, based on exact definitions and scientific analysis, too logical and convincing in a mathematical sense, but lacking in appeal to the heart. With him the heart should come first. He says: "Therefore it is far more important that a man should be a complete Socialist at heart than that he should be a Marxist in his head. (It is not possible to be a complete Marxist in one's head alone). For there is no difficulty in converting to Marxism a man who is a genuine Socialist at heart—that is, ready to give up everything for the establishment of complete economic equality among men."

Now, a man does not think with his heart, but with his head. True, his heart has something to do with the process, as do all the organs of the body. To become a Socialist, however, a man must think, and thinking is the special function of the brain. Mr. Murry would not, of course, deny this. Even his "Socialist at heart" must first have what Mr. Murry calls the idea of "complete economic equality among men" in his head. But why he must be ready to give up so much for it is a mystery, seeing that he has nothing to give up but his slavery.

The brain is an organ that develops by use and is a better organ the more it is developed. But even the cross-word enthusiast does not rack his brains for the mere sake of development. There must always be an incentive to thought; usually it springs from material interests in some shape or other.

To use Mr. Murry's phrase, the man who got the idea of "economic equality" must first have got the idea of economic inequality from his everyday experience. Consequently, however crude the process, it is a process of reasoning. Crude reasoning is often forcible, but seldom comprehensive, and the man who has only the two aforementioned ideas in his head is more easily confused or misled than the man who is capable of reasoning correctly from a series of connected facts or factors. The student of Marxian economics is, therefore, not only a better Socialist; he is better equipped to resist the wiles and intrigues of the political adventurer. But Mr. Murry will not have it that way. He says:—

"The fact is that Marxism, genuine dynamic Marxism, itself rests on an ethical postulate. It rests on the ethical postulate that the man who under-



stands the historical process, and approves of what he believes must be its eventual outcome, will make himself the willing instrument of the process. Without this ethical resolve in the individual, Marxism becomes a mere armchair theory of revolutions."

The words "historical process" are, of course, an abbreviation for the "materialist conception of history" discovered by Marx and Engels. The latter expresses it as follows:—

"That the economic structure of society at a given time furnishes the real foundations upon which the entire superstructure of political and juristic institutions, as well as the religious, philosophical and other abstract notions of a given period, are to be explained in the last instance."

Abstract notions based on sentimental ideas of justice, duty, patriotism, brotherly love, etc., are quite common to the period in which we are living. They are the result of economic relationships. The class that owns all the means of wealth-production exacts duty and patriotism from the dispossessed. And while exploiting them do actually obtain brotherly love—or is it money-bag worship?—in place of a natural resentment. The well-paid moralists of the capitalist class have built up quite a respectable doctrine around the idea of self-sacrifice, and large numbers of workers are quite incapable of seeing realities, so strongly are they affected by these and similar sentiments.

Now, while it may be true that men often act purely from sentimental motives, Mr. Murry says that when actions are dictated by reason alone, non-action invariably follows. Reason and the will to act are common sense, while Socialism of the heart and ethical postulates are quite obviously abstract notions with no foundations on the solid earth. True, the heart has always been spoken of as the organ of good intentions; but then, orthodoxy, that continually prates about this quality of the heart, is flatly opposed to Socialism. Consequently, Mr. Murry is responsible for a contradiction in terms, i.e., an ethical Socialist.

Moreover, according to him, the difference between the ethical Socialist and the Socialist without adjectives is the difference between action and inaction. The question of useful or useless action does not arise with him. Apparently that is irrelevant. Although the people most loudly advertising themselves as Socialists—the I.L.P.—have been nosing up a blind alley throughout their political existence. Even now, when their failure as a working-class party has forced them to take stock of their ideas, they are still befuddled with reforms that are based on capitalist ideas of justice, fairness, etc. The obvious course being to determine the cause of working-class poverty and the action necessary to end it.

The will to act in the case of the Socialist is not ethical, but an impulse to act which arises from self-interest. Convinced Socialists quite rightly

assume that every worker who recognises the soundness of Socialism will act in accordance with his reasoned conclusions. Whether the new-comer does little or much in the movement depends on circumstances, temperament, opportunity, physical and mental qualities, etc. The totality of these individual efforts at a given moment constitutes the Socialist Movement, with the growth of which, individual effort becomes more and more unnecessary and only the question of counting heads remains.

The Socialist is not prompted by ethical considerations in his work for Socialism. He works according to the strength of his convictions and his desire for Socialism. There is no question of sacrifice. He puts time and effort into the movement that brings nearer the thing he wants. Mr. Murry calls this an ethical resolve in the individual. The capitalist calls it by other names. Much depends on the point of view, but Mr. Murry's point of view does not square with either. The explanation, no doubt, lies with the party to which he belongs—a party that runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.

F. F.

### Will Politics Do Good?

In discussing Socialism with one's fellow workers, whilst agreeing that the present system of society is rotten and that something else will have to take its place, the statement is frequently made that "politics will do no good." Another objection frequently raised is that the members of the working class are often such traitors to each other that it is impossible to conceive that they should work together in a co-operative spirit for the establishment of Socialism. In support of the latter statement, instances were given to the writer where, in a 'bus and tram combine, a so-called "red-hot trade union socialist" had given away three of his fellow workers to the bosses, resulting in their dismissal; another case, where after an attempt to form a trade union, the leaders had been bought off and been given better jobs in the office, and also at the time of the shop stewards' movement, where the shop stewards themselves had been bought off and given jobs as inspectors. Such instances as this are common throughout industry.

They are, however, merely illustrations of the principle, long ago put forward by Marx and Engels, that it is the economic conditions which determine morality or conduct. Under capitalism, whilst the interests of the workers as a class are identical, yet each individual worker is striving against the others to get into a job, to hold it, or to get a better job than his fellow worker, and some workers, in an effort to curry favour with the bosses, will betray their own fellow workers, or allow themselves to be bought off by their masters. It is the dependence of the workers upon the capitalist class for a living which causes the sub-

servience and betrayals complained of. In a society where no man, through his ownership of the means of production, was in a position to control the lives of his fellow men, such betrayals could not occur, because there would be no boss to whom to run and tell the tale, or who could play off one worker against another by bribery.

Be it further noted that all the above instances occur in the industrial field as distinct from the political field. Is it to be inferred that, because the workers may sometimes betray one another on the industrial field, they would not do so upon the political field? The answer depends to a certain extent upon the type of the political association. In the case of the Liberal and Tory parties, we know that very few workers are actually members of these parties, and are, hence, powerless to control the parliamentary member. The Labour members, at the elections, are financed largely by the trade unions, and they secure support from all sections of the electors by making various promises. Once a member is elected, there is no means of controlling his actions. In general, however, the member elected does act more or less in accordance with the wishes of his electors, who have voted for the continuance of the present system, and if, whilst he is a Member of Parliament, he changes some of his views or his policy, he often feels compelled to undergo another election to test the feeling of his electorate. A confusion of thought often arises because the Labour Party is supposed to represent the workers, and there have been so many instances where members of this party have gone over to the other capitalist parties. The programme of the Labour Party has often been examined in this paper and shown to be not essentially different from that of any other capitalist party. Various reforms are advocated, but none of them are likely to ameliorate in any essential degree the conditions of the workers; in fact, the general effect is to worsen their conditions and to facilitate the smoother running of the capitalist machine. Therefore, when the leaders of the Labour Party go over to some other capitalist party, they are simply carrying on their career without changing their principles.

We, the Socialist Party of Great Britain, claim to be the only political party genuinely representing the interests of workers. We are an association of workers democratically organised with the object of gaining political power from the capitalist class. No member is in a position to control any other and, therefore, none can betray any other. If a member of the Party were elected to Parliament, he would go as a delegate of the socialists who had elected him, and they would see that he carried out their instructions.

It is only through politics, by the capture of political power from the capitalist class, who, at present, are in a position to control the army,

navy, and police force, that Socialism can be achieved. It is therefore the duty of all those who agree with us to join with us and work for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

R. M.

### NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

#### HEAD OFFICE. Each Sunday Evening.

Meetings will be held at 42, GREAT DOVER STREET, on Sunday evenings, at 8 p.m.

December 4th. Subject ... "Are we Marxists?" Speaker ... S. Goldstein.  
December 11th. Subject ... "The Fetish of Leadership." Speaker ... R. Innes.  
December 18th. Subject ... "The Working Class" Speaker ... "Sandy"  
January 1st, 1933. Subject ... "Socialism and Trade Unionism." Speaker ... G. Bellingham.  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion.

#### LEYTON. Sundays, Dec. 4th and 18th.

Meetings will be held on Sundays, December 4th and December 18th, at GROVE HOUSE, High Road, Leyton, at 7.30 p.m.

December 4th. Subject ... "Class War Strategy." Speaker ... A. Ginsberg.  
December 18th. Subject ... "Revolutionary Political Action." Speaker ... A. Kohn.  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion. Doors open 7 p.m.

#### POPLAR TOWN HALL. Sundays, Dec. 4th and Jan. 1st.

Meetings will be held at POPLAR TOWN HALL on Sundays, December 4th and January 1st, 1933, at 8 p.m. For full details see local announcements. All invited. Questions and discussion. Admission free.

#### BATTERSEA. Thursday, Dec. 15th.

A Meeting will be held at the LATCHMERE BATHS (Waiting Room entrance in Burns Road) on Thursday, December 15th, at 8.30 p.m.

Subject ... "Unity." Speaker ... R. Innes.  
All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion.

#### BETHNAL GREEN. Friday, Dec. 9th.

A Meeting will be held at BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY on Friday, December 9th, at 8 p.m.

Subject ... "The State and Revolution." Speaker ... A. Kohn.  
Admission Free. All invited. Questions and discussion.

#### STEPNEY. Wednesday, Dec. 7th.

A Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 7th, at 7.30 p.m., at St. Georges Library.

Subject ... "Bombs or Brains?" Speaker ... R. Innes.  
Questions and discussion. Admission free. All invited.

#### BROMLEY PUBLIC HALL. Sunday, December 11th.

A Meeting will be held at BROMLEY PUBLIC HALL, on Sunday, December 11th, at 7.30 p.m.

Subject ... "Socialism by Riot or Revolution?" Speaker ... E. Lake.  
Questions and Discussion. Admission free. All invited.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard

DECEMBER



1932

## Shorter Hours No Cure for Unemployment

Large numbers of people have been impressed with the suggestion that unemployment can be abolished or much reduced by shortening the hours of work while retaining capitalism. The argument takes the form that the overproduction of goods in relation to the demands of the market (with consequent falling prices and profits, and growing unemployment) can be met by reducing the hours of work. Now it is obvious that if wages were reduced along with hours (and assuming no intensification of work) the total volume of goods being produced would be smaller, but so would the total amount of wages. The problem would remain essentially the same as before, because the workers would have less money to spend, and this would off-set the smaller output.

Alternatively, the employers might pay the reduced wages to a larger number of workers, giving work to some unemployed. But in that case the total amount of wages would be the same as before (but spread over more workers) and the total output of goods would be the same as before (i.e., the shortening of hours would be off-set by the larger number of workers).

So that if wages are reduced along with hours the problem of "overproduction" is not solved and unemployment is only reduced by reducing the wages of the workers generally.

Various labour leaders, having therefore rejected the idea of shorter hours with reduced wages, have stood firmly by the notion that the problem can be solved if hours are reduced and wages left un-

changed. The Transport and General Workers' Union have made much of an agreement fixed up with Mander Brothers, paint manufacturers, of Wolverhampton, under which hours are reduced from 47 to 40 without reduction of the minimum rates of pay. The agreement may or may not be a satisfactory one in other respects, but it certainly does not show a way of remedying unemployment, for the change is accompanied by a reorganisation of the works and the introduction of a new system of piece-rates which will increase the output per head of the workers and will result in eventual dismissal of redundant staff. The only guarantee is that no dismissals shall take place for six months and that the dismissed men will then receive some "compensation." (See *Record*, published by Transport Workers' Union, October.)

In the meantime, the increased output at smaller costs will enable Manders to undersell their competitors and throw their workers into the ranks of the unemployed.

While the means of production and distribution remain in the ownership and control of a class instead of being the property of society, there is no solution of the poverty problem.

## Mussolini: The Reality behind the Shadow

The industrial city of Turin has hitherto been known as an area where a large number of workers have maintained unbroken hostility to Mussolini and the programmes of the Fascist Party. Recently, under the heading, "Mussolini Conquers Turin," the Italian Correspondent of the *Daily Express* (October 22nd and 24th) described how Mussolini had ventured into this stronghold of his working-class opponents and had won them over by his display of courage. The enthusiasm, according to the correspondent, was immense, stupendous! The Duce was greeted by thousands of cheering, yelling admirers. Turin lay willingly at his feet.

But the gilt on the gingerbread of Mussolini's popularity is somewhat spoiled by the same correspondent's account of the precautions taken by the hero to dissuade his opponents from giving expression to their opposition. Mussolini took no chances. First, there was an army of plain clothes detectives, 5,000 strong, rushed to Turin from all over Italy. Italian Air Force machines circled over Turin with orders to open fire on sight of any foreign aeroplanes heading for the city. (This was because, on a former occasion, Italian exiles showered anti-Fascist leaflets over some Italian towns.) Six hundred "suspects" (i.e., people suspected of not admiring Mussolini) were arrested

## Notes by the Way

## "Financial Sacrifices from Both Sides"

United Dairies, Ltd., is a very prosperous concern. The Directors' report for the year 1931-32 stated that "the business of the Company continues to expand." Net profit rose from £518,000 in 1929-30 to £549,000 in 1930-31, and to £592,000 in 1931-32; which is not too bad in these hard times. The rate of dividend on ordinary shares rose from 10 per cent. in 1929-30 to 11 per cent. in 1930-31 and to 12½ per cent. in 1931-32. So much for the shareholders. What about the workers? During the past year, after considering the matter for several years, the firm decided to extend to the milk distributing staff a six-day week, hitherto confined to the bottling staffs. Doubtless it was, as the Chairman said, of benefit to the "health and happiness" of the workers not to have to work seven days a week. He also stated (*Times*, October 29th, 1932) that "the efficiency of the service has been maintained and increased," but the change-over to a six-day week "involved certain financial sacrifices from both sides."

Now we are able to see what is meant by "sacrifices on both sides." The workers make financial sacrifices and get a six-day week, while the shareholders get increased efficiency, plus the "sacrifice" of seeing their dividend raised from 11 per cent. to 12½ per cent.

\* \* \*

## Death from the Air

Mr. Baldwin, in a speech on war, in the House of Commons on November 10th, reminded us of the way in which we shall be bombed to pieces in any future war. He said:—

I think it is well, also, for the man in the street to realise that there is no power on earth that can protect him from being bombed, whatever people may tell him. The bomber will always get through. . . . The only defence is in offence, which means that you have got to kill more women and children more quickly than the enemy if you want to save yourselves. . . . How have the nations tried to deal with this terror of the air? I confess that the more I have studied this question the more depressed I have been at the perfectly futile attempts that have been made to deal with this problem. The amount of time that has been wasted at Geneva in discussing questions such as the reductions of the size of aeroplanes, the prohibition of bombardment of the civil population, the prohibition of bombing, has really reduced me to despair."

(*Times*, November 11th, 1932.)

In the meantime, attention was drawn by the *Daily Express* to the fact that British armament manufacturers advertise in German and other newspapers their willingness to supply tanks, bombing planes, etc., to foreign Governments. Mr. T. O. M. Sopwith, the aircraft designer and manufacturer of the Hawker "bomber," defended this. He said

prior to the visit. The route of the triumphal procession was kept a secret until the last moment. All doors facing on to the streets on the route were locked by police order, and on the night of Mussolini's arrival all the windows in the streets which he traversed had to be illuminated. Lastly, every Fascist in Turin was fetched out to mount guard.

After all this, it is not surprising that the applause was not broken by one jarring note.

## Socialism and Industrial Unionism

I have been asked to reply to a criticism of the article, "Socialism and Industrial Organisation," (see the May issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD), which appears in the July issue of the *Revolutionary Socialist*. Criticism, to be effective, must at least be accurate. My critic commences with the misstatement of the title of my article, which dealt with the general question of industrial organisation and not specially with "Industrial Unionism," whether of the I.W.W. or the W.I.I.U. brand. The article did, it is true, refer to the failure of the S.L.P. to bring to birth in this country the body of which it was supposed to be the "political reflex"; but the main part of the article dealt with actual organisations, i.e., the factory committees. It showed, by quoting concrete detailed evidence, that attempts on the part of these bodies to supersede the Trade Unions had failed both in this and other countries.

The factory committees, elected in the main by non-Socialists, were as incapable as the Trade Unions of emancipating the workers from capitalist control. They were not based upon an understanding of the class struggle, and, like the Trade Unions, were found to be ready to assist the masters to carry on the existing system of exploitation once certain minor concessions had been granted.

Yet, in spite of this experience, the B.S.I.S.L.P. can think of nothing better to do than call upon workers to repeat the attempt to erect "shop committees . . . separate and apart from the Trade Unions" (see editorial article, p. 5). That they are merely camouflaged anarchists is made evident on p. 6, where their platform calls for "the abolition of the State" (para. 5). The present writer does not profess to be able to improve upon the masterly exposition of the scientific view of this aspect of the matter contained in Engels' "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" (p. 87, Whitehead Library). There he shows that so far from being abolished the State must be used by the workers in order to accomplish the supreme revolutionary act, i.e., their emancipation. After that it will die out.

E. B.



(*Daily Express*, November 12th, 1932) that aeroplanes of recent design are not allowed to leave the country, but that he sells Hawker bombers both to the Air Ministry and to foreign Governments because "no foreign Government will buy British machines unless they are identical with those sold to the Air Ministry."

If another war comes and, in Mr. Baldwin's words, "European civilisation is wiped out," it will be cheering to know that the bombers on both sides are of identical make and the product of a home industry!

\* \* \*

### Lenin and Trade Unionism: A Correction

In the November *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, under the heading "Tall Stories from Russia," the statement was made that Lenin advocated "lying and subterfuge" as a means of gaining control of the trade unions.

Although the words used by Lenin in this connection make it quite clear that he recommended using all kinds of deception, he did not actually use the word "lying." His words (reproduced in the *Australian Communist*, April 22nd, 1921) were:

It is necessary to be able to withstand all this (i.e., expulsion) and to go the whole length of sacrifice if need be, to resort to strategy and adroitness, illegal proceedings, reticence and subterfuge, to anything in order to penetrate into Trade Unions, remain in them and carry out communist work within them at any cost.

The utter failure of the Communists to gain tangible results by this policy shows how unsound it is.

\* \* \*

### The Inequalities of Pay in Russia

Nowadays the Soviet Government and the Communists pretend that their policy of increasing inequality of pay as between one individual and another according to output at the same work, or according to the grading of the work, is in line with Marxian teaching and is compatible with Socialism. Socialists recognise that these inequalities are features of capitalism and can have no place under Socialism, which involves the abolition of the wages system altogether. It is interesting to recall that Lenin shared our view and did not put forward the arguments now used by the Communists. In "The Soviets at Work," an address delivered in April, 1918, Lenin admitted that the need to attract specialists at high rates of pay was a sign of Russia's backwardness and was accepted only under necessity. He said:—

Furthermore, it is clear that such a measure is not merely a halt in a certain part and to a certain degree of the offensive against Capitalism . . . but also a step backward by our Socialist Soviet State, which has from the very beginning proclaimed and carried on a policy of reducing high salaries to the standard of wages of the average worker. . . . Of course there is another side to this question. The corrupting influence of high salaries is beyond

dispute—both on the Soviets . . . and on the mass of the workers.

He also said:—

We were forced now to make use of the old bourgeois method and agreed to a very high remuneration for the services of the biggest of the bourgeois specialists. All those who are acquainted with the facts understand this, but not all give sufficient thought to the significance of such a measure on the part of the proletarian state. It is clear that such a measure is a compromise, that it is a deflection from the principles of the Paris Commune and of any proletarian rule, which demand the reduction of salaries to the standard of remuneration of the average worker—principles which demand that career-hunting be fought by deeds not by words.

(The quotations above are from pages 17, 18 and 19 of the edition published in 1919 by the Socialist Information and Research Bureau, Glasgow.)

Now, when the inequality is rapidly increasing, the Russian rulers pretend that it is a feature of Socialism. Lenin, however, said, "To pay unequal salaries is really a step backward; we will not cheat the people by pretending otherwise."

\* \* \*

### Viscount Snowden on the Labour Programme

Rather late in the day, Viscount Snowden tells his former Labour Party associates something which the S.P.G.B. told them (and Snowden) many years ago. In an article in the *Sunday Express* (October 16th) he wrote as follows of the Labour Party:—

It gained its former political strength neither from its Socialist idealism nor its election programme. It was an electoral refuge for a vague discontent.

The old political parties had failed. Here was a new party which made the social condition of the people its claim to popular support.

Millions of men and women who know nothing about Socialism, and who have never read the Labour programme, vote for Labour candidates because they believe that this is a party which is going to do something—they don't know what—to improve their condition.

I have been in this programme-making business for forty years. I have always realised its futility. Every programme in which I have had a hand I have seen discarded and another put in its place, later to share the fate of its predecessor.

He finished the article with a very cruel blow. He told the Labour Party, which has always rejected Socialism in favour of "something now," that it ought to drop its silly promises to establish the millennium by Acts of Parliament immediately, and find "a practical policy."

\* \* \*

### Mr. Cole Scores 30

The following is from the *Star* (October 18th, 1932) and refers to Mr. G. D. H. Cole:—

A leading Socialist who has been busily counting up the number of organisations Mr. G. D. H. Cole has had a hand in starting tells me he has checked off thirty!

"The latest he is connected with is the Socialist League," he said "and some of us are wondering how long it will hold Mr. Cole's affection before another body is created."

Mr. Cole's past loves have included the Fabian Society, the I.L.P., the National Guilds League, and, of course, the Labour Party. Recently he shared in the formation of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda, which, after only 18 months, has been wound up after a conference had failed to give a sufficient majority for merging with the Socialist League.

Mr. Cole is an example of the so-called "intellectuals" who have invaded the working-class movement in recent years, much to their own pecuniary benefit and to the detriment of the working-class movement. Surrounded by worshipping students and trade unionists, Mr. Cole reaps the double reward of adulation and large sales for his books, a new one appearing at frequent intervals each time he changes his mind and takes up another unsound theory.

Mr. Cole is a bad judge of political parties. It is interesting to recall what he wrote about the S.P.G.B. and about his own organisation, the National Guilds League, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (Twelfth Edition, 1922, Vol. XXXI, page 324, and Vol. XXXII, page 507).

Of the S.P.G.B. he wrote:—

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is a very small and unimportant body of rigid Marxians of the extreme left wing.

(Vol. XXXII, p. 507.)

At that time he was full of the idea of Guild Capitalism (miscalled Guild Socialism), and recorded with gusto the growth of the Guild Movement and the formation of Guilds like the Building Guild.

Within a year or so, the Building Guild was hopelessly bankrupt, and the mushroom crop of Guilds which had sprung up in many other industries had completely disappeared. The National Guilds League, like many other of Mr. Cole's enthusiasms, is now as dead as the Dodo, and even when it was alive its organ (*The Guild Socialist*) had a much smaller circulation than the organ of the S.P.G.B.

\* \* \*

### The Labour Leaders and the "Intellectuals"

Just at the moment, Mr. Cole, in his foreword to the new edition of his "British Working Class Movement," is telling the trade unions that their policy and methods of organisation should be changed. We agree; but Mr. Cole is one of the least likely persons to have any sound ideas on the subject. Although never constant for long to any idea, he shows no sign of having learned from his past mistakes.

It is popularly believed that the workers gain through having the so-called intellectuals available

to advise the Labour Leaders how to lead. What actually happens is rather like this. The trade union official, who is generally far better able to form sound opinions on trade union policy than are the academic Coles and Laskis, observes a stirring among his members in the form of interest in some new or resuscitated theory. Mistrusting his own judgment, he dashes off to seek the guidance of the "intellectuals." The "intellectuals," who are equally hesitant about putting forward definite suggestions, lest they should clash with the prevailing sentiment among the workers (and thus spoil their popularity and book sales), promptly set about discovering which way the wind is blowing and how strong it is likely to be. Having made up their minds on this, they then offer their advice, suitably tricked out in university jargon, the advice consisting of whatever theory they believe the workers are beginning to take up. The trade union official and the "intellectual" then feel mutually reinforced and comforted in their beliefs, and jointly offer their new wisdom to their members, the members being under the two-fold illusion that they are being given a lead and that the lead is the outcome of some solid thought by a reliable guide.

\* \* \*

### A Confusion of Parties

A few years ago the final argument of the Labour Party supporter who could not make headway against the case of the S.P.G.B. was a complaint that our separate existence confused the seeker after Socialist knowledge. "Why could we not all get together inside one big party?" The answer is that it would be fatal and absurd for a Socialist Party to lose its identity inside a conglomeration of reformists like the Labour Party. And it is curious to notice how loath are even the reformist groups to give up their separate existence in the great family party. In addition to the I.L.P. (Maxton), which left the Labour Party over the matter of Standing Orders, and the Communist Party, which wanted to get in the Labour Party but was rejected, there are now the following competing bodies all under the Labour umbrella: The Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, the Socialist League (formerly the affiliationist wing of the I.L.P.), the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda (now dissolved after a short life), the Scottish Socialist Party (the Scottish wing of the League), the Clarion Fellowship, and the Co-operative Party.

And in face of this medley the reformists still have the impudence to tell us that the way to unite the workers is on reform programmes!

Incidentally, how William Morris, of the old Socialist League, with its fierce opposition to reforms and to Parliamentary action, would snort if he could hear the new Leaguers claiming that they have inherited the spirit of Morris.

H.



## Roosevelt and the American Workers

The faith which the American workers have in the new President, Mr. Roosevelt, shows that, like the workers of England, they cherish the belief that somebody, someday, will rescue them from their poverty.

They have been told that the Roosevelt Government will be a business Government. In other words, the Cabinet will not consist of politicians, but of business men—men who will have the trade of the country at heart—men who will understand what is needed to put the U.S.A. on a good business footing.

And, blinding their eyes to the fact that business Governments have held sway in the past without bettering their lot at all, the workers of America are congratulating themselves and expecting Roosevelt and his Cabinet to give them better conditions.

The possible passing of Prohibition has played a great part in winning votes in this well-boasted Presidential Election. Superficialities have, as usual, drawn the attentions of the working class away from the things that matter. What should prohibition or its abolition matter to them, when, in many cases they find it difficult to secure the bare necessities of life?

What should it matter to them which set of individuals composes their Government? The means of production, and the wealth the workers produce with these means, will still be in the hands of the capitalist class, and the workers will consequently remain poor.

There will still be a Secretary of Finance to keep an eye on the property interests of the American master class, whilst a Secretary of the Navy will perform his function of maintaining a fleet to protect American territory against other sections of capitalists.

Moreover, there will still be a Secretary of War who will not hesitate to send the youth of America on a mission of killing and mutilating if this is necessary in securing new markets and territorial advantages. And both Army and Navy will be used against the workers when capitalist interests require this.

In short, working class conditions will not be altered in the least. Unemployment and poverty will still exist, and there will still be present the dread of a future war. There is only one remedy. The overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a new social system—a system with the common ownership of the means of production and distribution as its basis. That, and that alone, will bring about the emancipation of the working class, not only of America, but of all countries.

F. HAWKINS

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## Machinery and Socialism

A correspondent asks us what is our attitude towards those who condemn machine production and want to go back to handicraft methods.

Some time ago, within the past year, I read an issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*, one of the most widely circulated weekly magazines in America, and a correspondent, Marcossan it was, gave an account of the character, aims and objects of the Nazi, or National Socialists in Germany in that issue of the *Post*.

Among the points he listed and described as features of that movement, was one that struck me as having a lot in common with the Socialist philosophy, and it was this:—

The Nazi's organisation deplore the predominant role that the machine occupies, in this day and age, in the lives of the masses living within those countries that are for the most part industrialised.

They go in for rites and ceremonial functions that are reminiscent of Mediaevalism, as a reaction to the machine age, and they would revive the colourful picturesqueness of the life people lived back in the period of the Holy Roman Empire.

However fallacious all this may seem to us, is there not something wholesome and worthy in a resentment against the necessity for being dominated by the machine, both in economic and social phases of life? Many authorities agree in this; that the machine age has all but done away with a desire in the present generation for the acquisition of culture, i.e., literature, music and art, and the tendency on the part of the younger generation, so far as the development of their mental capabilities go, are all too one-sided, in the direction of motor mechanics and the repair of engines, etc. The types of people who can carve wonderful designs in wood-work, plaster or clay are only to be found in remote districts like the Bavarian Alps, the Black Forest, Sicily, and other places where the spirit of the Middle Ages still lingers on.

### Reply.

It may be as well to start off by explaining that the name used by the Hitler Party in Germany—"National Socialists"—does not justify the assumption that they have something in common with Socialists. Hitler, in the attempt to build up a large working class following, has found it useful to talk in the phrases of his opponents, the Social Democrats. But neither in his mouth nor in their mouths do these phrases betoken knowledge or acceptance of socialist principles.

Nor do we share Hitler's alleged longing for mediaevalism and hatred of machine production. That such a hatred should exist is natural enough among workers who knew or have heard from their parents of the easier conditions under which handicraft production was carried on before the craftsman's products were swept off the market by the cheaper products of the capitalist factory. But it is not correct to describe the workers' subjection to the capitalist as being simply a condition of "being dominated by the machine," and it is also fallacious to assume that the course of industrial development can be reversed. If it were possible to reproduce the greatly overpraised conditions of the Middle Ages the same developments which undermined feudalism and led to its replacement by capitalism and machine production would be at work, leading on to the same results.

The chief objection, however, to our correspon-

dent's argument is the belief that the disabilities under which the workers now suffer are due to their subjection to machines. It is true that machine production, like every other form of production, imposes certain restrictions on the producers. It is true, for example, that it is necessary for all the crew of a boat or a train to be ready for work at a stated time, although this may involve considerable discomfort for those who would prefer to stay in bed for another hour. But what of the discomfort of having to get up early to milk the cows? What of the inconvenience of having to make hay while the sun was shining, instead of at some other time more pleasing to the mediaeval peasant? Some machine work is monotonous under capitalist conditions (perhaps some monotony is unavoidable under any conditions), but what of the deadly monotony and brutal exhaustion of primitive agriculture, and of housework?

Machinery possesses two associated possibilities. It will, when socially owned, act as a saver of much unpleasant and exhausting labour, and it will make it possible so to increase the production of articles needed by the population as a whole that the necessary hours of labour will be greatly reduced. When this happens the majority will have opportunities of recreation and self-development now denied to them. It is not the machine which prevents the workers from living full lives, but the private ownership of the machines, along with the remainder of the means of production and distribution. ED. COMM.

## A Mad World

(From the *Star*, October 13th, 1932.)

Over 20,000 British out-of-work settlers stranded in Australia are begging to be brought home. Forty children yesterday left British homes and orphanages for "down under." It's a mad world, my masters.

## Newcastle-on-Tyne and Gateshead

With a view to extending its activities to Gateshead, the Newcastle-on-Tyne branch has transferred its business meetings to the Gateshead district. The branch will henceforth be known as the Gateshead Branch.

A Class for the study of Marxian Economics is being formed, and non-members are specially invited. Full particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, EDMUND HOWARTH, 95, Bewick Road, Gateshead.

## The Socialist Party of Great Britain AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

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## Producing and Paying

A correspondent asks if it is correct that "Labour is the source of all wealth."

The answer to this question is "No." To say that "Labour is the source of all wealth" would mean that Labour of itself is some kind of inexhaustible reservoir from which wealth (articles of use—or use-values) can be extracted, and would leave out of account the part played by Nature. It is the sort of loose phrase that might be justified in casual conversation if the part played by Nature is left to be understood, but as a definition to be used in studying economic laws it is useless and likely to lead to unsound conclusions.

Nature provides the materials to which labour is applied, and Nature and Labour play an inseparable part in the process of wealth production. Marx criticised the phrase "Labour is the source of all wealth." He wrote:—

The phrase quoted is found in all primers for children, and is accurate insofar as it is left to be understood that the work is effected with the aid of the appropriate object and means. But a Socialist programme ought not to permit itself the use of such bourgeois locutions; it ought not to ignore the existence of the conditions upon which the meaning of the phrase solely depends. ("Criticism of the Gotha Programme.")

The correct statement of the source of wealth is that wealth is produced by the application of human labour to Nature-given material.

Another correspondent, while agreeing with the above definition, thinks that it contradicts our contention that rates and taxes are not a burden on the working class or, as he puts it, that the workers "do not pay for armaments."

Here, again, is need for precision. The idea behind our correspondent's difficulty is that if the workers produce all wealth, then they must pay for everything. The ability to pay is associated in his mind with the ability to produce. But this is a mistaken notion. The workers do not produce for themselves but for their employers. The whole of the articles produced belong to the employers, who sell them and receive the proceeds of the sale. Out of the proceeds they pay away various amounts, including the wages of the workers and rates and taxes. If the armament burden could be reduced the capitalists would benefit by paying away less of their profits in the form of taxes for armaments. Not so the workers. The workers have no means of paying for anything other than the wages they receive (supplemented by charity, social services, etc.). If taxes are reduced, and if, as a consequence, prices fall, the workers' cost of living also falls, and with it their wages. The workers produce the wealth but do not own it.

The tax burden which the various groups of property owners are constantly trying to pass off on to each other, cannot be passed off on to the propertyless class. DON.



## "Common Ownership"

OURSELVES v. THE LABOUR PARTY

At a meeting in the provinces addressed recently by a member of the S.P.G.B. someone in the audience protested against the statement that the S.P.G.B. was the only party that stood for Socialism; and produced a membership card of the Labour Party, wherein occurred the statement that the party stood for "Common ownership." The above difficulty is typical of the state of mind of many workers who support the Labour Party under the impression that they are thereby helping to emancipate the members of their class.

In the first place it is necessary to bear in mind that the membership of the local Labour Parties is small compared with that of the total membership of the Labour Party. The bulk of the membership consists of affiliated Trade Unionists (who may be anything, politically, from Tories to Anarchists). They form the basis for the power of the leaders of the party, who adjust their electoral programmes to the varied ideas of those who pay the piper. Thus we find in Labour Party programmes a mish-mash in which the views of Liberal industrial capitalists and the Trade Union bosses predominate. In these programmes the idea of common ownership finds no place, although the words are used in their object. Common ownership would deprive the capitalists of their property rights, i.e., of their power to exact rent, interest, and profit from the labour of the workers. Common ownership involves a social revolution, the abolition of the mode of living of the ruling class in present-day society. It will be resisted by this class by every means in its power, being directly opposed to its interests.

Let us see how much resistance is offered to the programme of the Labour Party. Details of this were dealt with in last month's issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD ("The Labour Party Conference").—Even when the Labour Party uses the phrase "common ownership" it is used as if it were synonymous with "public ownership." "Labour and the Nation," calls for the "public ownership of the coal, transport and power industries" (p. 47). No intelligent capitalist opposes such measures, in principle.

As the Liberal Industrial Report published in 1928 has it:—

Public concerns of one kind or another already cover so vast a field that the supposed choice between Individualism and Socialism is largely an obsolete issue. An examination of the existing types of Public Concerns shows that the Socialist would gain nothing by assimilating to a single theoretical model a diversity developed by experience to meet actual situations. On the other hand, it would be quite impossible to scrap the elaborate legislation enacted by Governments of every political complexion and hand over our public utilities and railways system to the operation of uncontrolled Individualism. There is, therefore, no question of principle at stake, but only one of degree of expediency, and of method.

("Britain's Industrial Future," page 456.)

The Socialist is not concerned, as is suggested above, with any "theoretical model." We have no cut-and-dried straight-jacket into which we wish to thrust industries. We know that the precise form assumed by the organisation of industry after the revolution will depend as always upon experience and changing conditions. Hence we offer no ready-made plans.

People who are prepared to tolerate and support capitalist ownership (whether private or "public") are full of plans. They have to be. The problems created by capitalism are so numerous that those engaged in its administration spend their time necessarily in endeavouring to solve them and in finding ways and means of reconciling the antagonistic interests involved. Socialists, on the other hand, recognise that the most fundamental antagonism of all, that between the workers and the capitalists as classes, can find no solution within any form of capitalist ownership. What can it matter to the workers whether they are exploited by a joint-stock company, a public utility corporation set up by a Labour Government, or by a Government Department? During the strike of 1926 drivers and conductors of the London General Omnibus Co. came out along with similar grades in the employ of the London County Council Tramways.

They were members of the same union, members of the same class, with the same interest, hostile to that of the employing class no matter by what the organisation might be, through which the interests of the Capitalists were represented. Only common ownership of the means of living as proposed by the Socialist Party of Great Britain can abolish this conflict of interests, and it is the business of Socialists to make this plain to the workers.

The Labour Party, however, found no difficulty in accepting office with Liberal support, just as it found it easy to win seats in Parliament by means of Liberal programmes. The most advanced proposals of the Labour Party only involve the buying out of groups of capitalists. How can the workers, who have nothing, buy out those who have everything?

The Labour Party propose to convert shareholders into Government bondholders, enjoying interest guaranteed by the Government. This will leave the working class non-owners in the same position as they are now. The capitalist class as a whole, being politically organised, would continue to use the State as its executive power; and would also use the Labour Party, as it has already done, to confuse the workers by accepting official responsibility for the administration of capitalism.

Lacking definite Socialist principles the Labour Party can only repeat the disappointments and failures to which it has hitherto led those workers who have placed their trust in it, breaking up into fragments whenever faced by a crisis that demands definite action in the interest of the workers.

Having been built up on the "principle" that it was necessary to gain the support of the Liberal section of the capitalists for "reforms," it can act only as the tool or catspaw of that section.

There is no substitute for the conscious political organisation of the working-class aiming at the common ownership of the means of life. That involves constant opposition to all sections of the master-class, which is represented in this country only by the S.P.G.B. E. B.

## Demands which Have Not Effective Backing

During the final stages of the debate on the Means Test Bill in the House of Commons, Mr. Seymour Cocks, M.P. (Labour, Broxtowe), was reported as saying: "Men are unemployed, not through their own fault, but as a result of the economic system under which they live. That being so, the fault lies with society."

In saying that much, Mr. Cocks stated a fact so well-known that it has become almost a platitude. Prominent men of other parties have said the same thing years ago. It is not necessary to belong to the Labour Party to become acquainted with a fact that is so obvious.

The capitalist system is undoubtedly responsible for unemployment, which is only a part of the general evil of poverty for which the system is to blame. "When the workers are considering Mr. Cocks's suggested remedy they should keep that fact in mind. His remedy is as follows:—

"We say they have a right to demand from society everything required to keep them in strength, health, and self-respect. This should not be looked on as State relief, but as compensation paid by society in default of providing work."

There is, of course, no obstacle preventing the unemployed from making any demands they choose.

The workers have been demanding this, that and the other thing, ever since they have had leaders, with varying degrees of non-success. Successive governments have permitted them to go on demanding. Most of the demands put forward by labour leaders, in the name of the workers, have been made on the Government in office at the time. But Mr. Cocks makes his demand on society.

In blaming society for unemployment Mr. Cocks is right; in suggesting a remedy that can only be sponsored by the capitalist class, he is wrong. If the social system is to blame, then society, as a whole, is responsible. The capitalist class because they are interested in preserving unemployment; and the working class because they fail to understand its cause and cure. While the working class submit to capitalist exploitation—the cause of poverty and unemployment—and by their votes give the capitalist class control, the latter,

quite naturally, deal with the question along lines that suit their interests as a class.

To put the case in a nut-shell, unemployment is only a part of the greater and more general evil from which the workers suffer. But as a class, the latter outnumber the capitalists many times. Organised in the Socialist Party on the basis of their class they could easily swamp all capitalist parties, and gaining political control, establish Socialism, when all forms of poverty due to exploitation would be ended.

The responsibility is on the working class to bring this about. They are the class that suffers unemployment and the fear of unemployment. Only the class that suffers can bring about its own emancipation. Demands are useless unless backed by an effective force, and unnecessary when this force is on the workers' side.

Mr. Cocks's last statement, that unemployment pay "should not be looked on as State relief, but as compensation paid by society in default of providing work," shows that he is not opposed to the capitalist system in itself. He is quite prepared to leave the system intact in return for the right of the unemployed to demand the necessities of life.

Right without might is an illusion of the sentimentalist. Might lies behind the guns of the armed forces, and it allows what "rights" it deems fit.

F. F.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City (Room 7), where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

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Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

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### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

#### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sunday</b> ...	... Tooting Broadway, Garratt Lane, 11.30 a.m.
	... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m.
	... Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.
	... Waltham, Liverpool Street, 11.30 a.m.
	... Finsbury Park, 11.30 p.m.
	... Clapham Common, 3.30 p.m.
	... Prince of Wales, Paddington, 7.30 p.m.
<b>Monday</b> ...	... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m.
	... Highbury Corner, N., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b> ...	... Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.
	... Tottenham, West Green Corner, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b> ...	... Bethnal Green, "Salmon and Ball," Cambridge Road, E., 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b> ...	... Prince of Wales, Paddington, 8 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays, 8 p.m., at Bethnal Green Trades and Labour Club, Cambridge Road. Communications to H. Solly, 2, Winthrop Street, Brady Street, E.1.

**BIRKENHEAD.**—Secretary, J. R. B. Hargreaves, 12a, Colquitt Street, off Bold Street, Liverpool. Branch meets every Thursday 7.30 p.m., at 36, Cloughton Road. Lecture and discussion after branch business. Non-members invited.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Hill Top Café, 197, Spring Hill, 1st Sunday in month at 11 a.m.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DAGENHAM.**—Communications to Sec., at 396, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, E.1. Branch meets every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m. at Limehouse Library (Committee Room) Commercial Road, E.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., at 15, Barclay Place.

**GATESHEAD.**—Secretary, Edmund Howarth, 95, Bewick Road, Gateshead, Co. Durham, where branch meets every Tuesday 7.30 p.m. Discussion after branch business.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, 8 p.m., at 60, Fisher Street, Dennistoun, Glasgow, E.1. Sec. W. Law, at above address.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, at 14A, Graham Road, Hackney, 8 p.m. Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., G. White, 53, Addison Street, Ardwick. M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 7 p.m.—10.30, 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W. 10. Sec., A. Bentley, 31, Claremont Road, W.9.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., J. Rodgers, 136, Rockingham Lane.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5, Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33, Ernest Street, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library, 8 p.m.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m., Springfield Social Club, Garraat Lane, Tooting, opposite Burntwood Lane. Sec., J. Keable, 15, Haverhill Road, S.W.12.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Sec., F. A. Hammond, 64, Stroud Green Road, N.4. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, Room 2, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 64, Bloxhall Road, Leyton, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High Street, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Branch Directory—continued.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.